

Lloyd *MARY*
THE
Birth
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR
1706
VIRGIN'S VICTORY:

BEING

The MEMOIRS of a very GREAT
LADY at the Court of *France*.

Written by HERSELF.

In which the Artifices of designing Men are fully
detected and exposed; and the Calamities they
bring on credulous believing Women, are parti-
cularly related.

Translated from the Original, by the Author of
La Belle Assemblée.

V O L. II.

*In vain are musty Morals taught in Schools,
By rigid Teachers, and as rigid Rules,
Where Virtue with a frowning Aspect stands,
And frights the Pupil from her rough Commands;
But charming Woman can true Converts make,
We love the Precept for the Teacher's sake;
Virtue in them appears so bright, so gay,
We bear with Transport, and with Pride obey.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for ELIZA HAYWOOD, at the Sign of Fame,
under the great Piazza in Covent-Garden. 1742.

VIRTIUOUS VILLAGE

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THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
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VOL. II. PART. VII.



INDULGING, as I said, this dangerous Curiosity, I past from my Bed-Chamber into a Clofet, adorned with large Pannels of Looking-Glafs, the Hangings and Window-Curtains were Crimson Damask fring'd with Gold : Twelve Pictures all curious Landscapes, on which several little Children seem'd diverting themselves, with Sports suitable to their Age, were placed between the Glasses, and at the upper end was a fine carved Book-Cafe, containing a little Library of entertaining Books.

V O L. II.

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This magnificent Cabinet opened into a Wardrobe, in the midst of which stood my Toilette, covered with blue Taffety, embroidered with silver Stars, and covered with a fine Lawn laced round with *Brussels*. It was furnish'd with every gay Trinket, that distinguishes Women of Fashion from the meaner Sort——such as Bracelets, Ear-rings, Necklaces, Ribbons, Fans and Gloves. I could have contemplated much longer on these gay Objects, if the Fear of being interrupted before I had gone thro' all the Rooms, had not obliged me only to take a transient View.

A small Alcove next attracted my Admiration, on account of a fine Settee supported by kneeling *Cupids*, and others which seem'd in act of flying, bearing over it a Canopy of white Sattin embossed with Flowers, so natural, one could not without Difficulty imagine them the Effect of Art. The Chairs were of the same curious Workmanship, and this as well as the Cabinet was adorned with Pictures and Glasses.

From this I went into a Dining-Room, where I found a large Buffet well filled with all Manner of Utensils all of Silver, and some gilt fit for a Table, on one side ; and opposite to it another, no less furnished with China of the most elegant Taste——the Hangings here were Tapestry, and the Floor covered with a fine Carpet——the Window Curtains green Damask laced with Gold, and made in the Festoon Manner——and in one Corner a Screen of such exquisite Painting, that well deserved the Admiration of a much better Judge than myself.

At last I returned to my Bed-Chamber, and passing by a large *India* Chest, the Key of which being in it, I lifted up the Top, and found it full of rich Silks, fine Hollands, Lawns, Cambricks, and Muslins, all in whole Pieces, to be made up into Garments, as I should think them fit for, and was proper for all the different Seasons of the Year. Nothing was here omitted that could possibly be thought on, even of the most trifling nature, and so well fancied, that it was not possible for a Woman, who had spent her whole Life in
nothing

nothing but the Study of Dress, to have made a better or genteeler Choice.

My giving a Detail of these Things, may possibly be looked upon as tedious, but I thought it necessary in Order to give the Reader a just Idea of my new Admirer——nor indeed can I to this Day remember his Generosity, and obliging Attention, without the greatest Gratitude; to say therefore, that I was not highly affected with it, at that Time, would be injuring Sincerity, and tho' I could not then be convinced, as I since have been, that he had no criminal Views in what he did, yet I freely confess, his settling me in a Manner so pleasing to my Inclinations, flatter'd my Vanity more than it alarm'd my Virtue. O how dangerous a Situation, would this have been to a young Creature, with almost any other Man than the disinterested *St. Fal*, or who had not the good Fortune, as I had, to inspire in all those who liked me a certain Respect, which would not suffer them to exceed the bounds of Honour.

The little Repose however I had taken the preceding Nights, fatigued me to that Degree, that the Pleasure I took in looking over all the fine things before me, gave way to the Desire of resting my aching Eyes, so threw my- on the Bed, and soon fell into a profound Sleep: the present Contentment of my Mind prevented any unpleasing Dreams, and only soft and agreeable Ideas possess'd my ever-waking Fancy.

I awoke not till the Day was very far advanced, nor perhaps had then done so, but for the Noise of Coaches hurrying pass my Windows; and then remembring I had fastened the Doors, I got up and open'd that of my Bed-Chamber——I had no sooner drawn the Bolt than my Waiting-Woman entered: O my Stars! Madam, said she, with a fawning Smile, you are very timorous to shut yourself up thus at Noon-Day——I have been a hundred Times I believe at the Door, to know your Ladyship's Commands, but the fear of disturbing you made me forbear knocking. I answer'd her in a very careless Manner; indeed there was somewhat in her Countenance that was quite disagreeable to me——there

are involuntary Antipathies in Nature, and from my Childhood I was too liable to these sort of Prepossessions ; but as they sometimes prove unjust, since I have arrived at Years of Maturity, I have taken no small Pains to correct this Disposition in me ; and could wish all my Sex would do the same ; for it argues a great Weakness in the Understanding, and frequently occasions our making an ill Choice of Friends : many People there are who have very unpromising Aspects, yet have Souls infinitely more noble, than those of the most engaging Countenances. But I had not yet sufficiently grounded myself in this Maxim, and *Brochan*, for so this Woman was called, experienced it, for I neither could look upon her, nor speak to her with that Affability I did to others, and which, according to the high Opinion she had of herself, she expected from me.

While she was doing something about the Rooms, I placed myself at one of the Windows——it was now near Sun-set, the Evening extremely pleasant, and abundance of People were taking the Air——I had not been accustomed to such sights, having hitherto been shut up in Castles, or Convents in country Villages, and the great Variety of Objects which now presented themselves, afforded me a most agreeable Amusement. I was prodigiously charmed with the Elegance, and Genteelness of the Women's Dresses ; I examin'd them with the strictest Observation, and those which most suited my own Fancy, and that I had a Mind to imitate, drew my Eyes after them, as far as I was able to distinguish one Object from another. Ah ! that such Trifles should have the Power to engross my Attention, at a Time, when the most material Matter that could befall me, ought to have left no Room for any thing but itself——But I was young, and a Woman.

All my Sex, if they would deal with the same Sincerity I do, must acknowledge that to be curious in the Examination of each other, is blended in our Nature, and one of our most strong Propensities——and this Desire is most commonly attended with a kind of Envy, arising from Self-love——'Tis very difficult for one beautiful

ful Woman to do justice to another, and as greatly as I have laboured to overcome this Meanness in me, even to this Day I am apt to feel some of its Impressions.

While I was thus employ'd in making my Observations on all that passed by, I felt myself clasp'd in the Arms of some Body, who taking the Advantage of the Posture I was standing in, took me about the Waist, without my being able to know who held me——I blush'd with Shame and Indignation, and struggling with all my Might, disengaged myself, and turning about saw it was *Madam de Genneval*, laughing very heartily at the Confusion she had put me in.

It would be no easy matter to surprize your Ladyship, said she, you are so much on your Guard, and are beside so very strong, that little would be got with sporting with you in this Manner. I asked her Pardon with a Smile, for the rough Treatment I had given her, and she told me she would accept my Apology for this Time; but that she would not promise me the same Indulgence for the future, nor indeed, added she, will I be entirely reconciled now, but on Condition you give me the honour of your Company at Supper. She made this Invitation with too good a Grace for me to refuse her, and having given her my Promise, we returned to the Window, where having placed ourselves, we began to pass our Censures on all that came within the reach of our Observation.

Madam de Genneval had a particular Talent for this dangerous and ill-natured Pleasure——Dress, Figure, Countenance, nothing escaped her, the Women found little Favour from her; and those who were most handsome, incurred the most severe Strokes of her satirical Genius: To the Men indeed, she was somewhat more merciful, but praised none but those who were of Quality, or at least of great Fashion in the World.

We had spent a considerable Time in this Amusement, when the Sound of Trumpets, Horns, and Kettle-Drums, at well as a great hurry in the Street, made me enquire into the Cause. It is the King returning from Hunting, replied *Madam de Genneval*, we shall see him pre-

sently pass just before us. A strange Palpitation of my Heart seized me at these Words——they brought to my Mind the first Time I had seen his Majesty, and the Consequences of my Transports at that Interview——the Admiration my dear Marquis had testified at first Sight of me——the Means he took to render himself acceptable to me afterwards——the little Chat of our Villagers on that Occasion; and in fine, the whole Series of my Adventures rushed at once into my Head, and threw me for some Moments into the most profound Resvery——in which perhaps I should much longer have been buried, in spite of the gay Impertinence of *Madam de Genneval*, who continued still talking to me, if the King's near approach had not roused my Attention, and drawn it to the Contemplation of those undescribable Graces, which shone about his Royal Person.

I was now arrived at an Age more capable of distinguishing, and needed no Instructions to point out to me my illustrious Master——'tis impossible to express the Satisfaction I took in seeing this dazzling Troop, every one of whom by his Air and Dress seeming no less than a King, nor could have been taken for less, but by the Homage they paid to him who really was so. And indeed since I have lived at Court, and seen the Strangers who daily resort thither to view the State and Magnificence of it, I have had the Pleasure to observe, that they seem little less transported with it than I was at that Time.

The Court passed just under our Window, and contrary to what was usual, as I afterwards was told, moved very slow; I was so deeply taken up with what I saw, that I never considered I was in a plain Undress, and *Madam de Genneval*, set out with all the Embellishments of a Woman fond of attracting Admiration.

Good Heavens! cried, that Lady with a Self-sufficient Air, what Creatures these Men are——one can't be at a Window, but they stare one out of Countenance——I beg your Ladyship will observe, continued she, how all their Eyes are turned upon us!——these Words, made me indeed take Notice, that tho' all the Windows
were

were full, ours seemed to draw the whole Attention——but she went on——it does not much surprize me, pursued she, for I am so well known, that it is always so whenever I appear——the King himself has done me the Honour to look on me with some Consideration——not, continued the vain Woman, with an affected Air of Modesty, that I attribute this to any extraordinary Merit in me; but because my Husband goes every Day to Court, and is very much respected there, his Wife tho' even less agreeable than myself, could not fail of being taken Notice of.——See, cried she, his Majesty looks up at us, he certainly remembers my Face——for Heaven's sake let us retire——I can stand it no longer I protest——my Cheeks are all over in a glow. She spoke this in so childish and affected Tone, that I could scarce refrain laughing.

In that Instant a Nobleman in an exceeding rich Hunting Dress, made several of those who were about him turn their Eyes on me, crying out, did you ever see any thing so exquisitely handsome as that young Lady!——the Negligence of her Dishabille, serves to set off her natural Charms——on this, above Twenty of them check'd their Horses, to make a low Bow to me: The King, who had stop'd to speak to one of his Retinue, looked up a second Time, and took off his Hat; I blushed at this Honour prodigiously, and believing I ought not to stand as if I were insensible of it, made a very low Obedience. O Madam, cried, Madam *de Genneval*, what is your Ladyship doing, no-body ever salutes the King——we shall be taken for meer Country Gentlewomen. She spoke this so loud, that several of the Courtiers heard it, as I could perceive by their whispering and smiling one at another; but I was so confus'd at the reprimand, that I believe I should not have been able to speak for a considerable Time, if Madam *de Genneval* had not endeavoured to divert me from making any Reflections on it, by giving me the Names and History of all his Majesty's Retinue; but I had not forgot the Mortification she had inflicted on me, and I still think my Resentment justifiable.

Supper-time drawing near, she entreated me to go down Stairs, I would fain have changed my Head-dress, but she would not suffer me, telling me I was killingly handsome, as I was——we shall see you ornamented enough, I doubt not, said she, but for once, let us enjoy you in your native Charms. This Compliment was answered by me in the politest Manner I could, nor did I forget to let her see I had a very good Opinion of her Beauty, which pleased her excessively; a Weakness too common with us all, unless corrected by a more than ordinary share of good Sense.

She thought herself so much obliged to what I said, that she took me in her Arms, begging Pardon for the Freedom, and cried, O how different is the Behaviour of a true Woman of Quality, any body may see your Ladyship, has never conversed with any but those in high Life. I could not here help smiling to myself at the force of Pre-possession, as indeed it soon after proved; for as long as she took me for the Countess *de Roches*, she was all Complaisance, all fawning Flattery; but when, as she soon after, had reason to suspect I was not of that Quality, nothing could be more gross in her Reflections.

Pressed as I was to go down to Supper in my Night-dress, I believe I should not have consented, if Monsieur *de Genneval* had not come into the Room, and surprized us in the Debate: This Gentleman paid his Compliments to me in a graceful manner enough——he had some share of Wit, but like his Wife was a little too sensible of it himself, and a Person of any Penetration, might easily perceive it in him——as Super-intendant to the Duke *de*——he imagined himself Company for any Body, and in that Notion was sometimes rather too pert and familiar with those he conversed with: Tho' this was easily pardoned in him on Account of the Diversion the Sallies of his Wit afforded. How much more easily do we imitate the worst Part of a Character than the best; Madam *de Genneval* had all the satyrick Disposition of her Husband, without the least Grain of his Good nature; whenever he made a biting Reflection
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the Politeness would not suffer the Person to feel the Sting ; but when Madam *de Genneval* said any severe Thing, it was done in a manner which shewed she took a Pleasure in it, and was therefore extremely disobliging.

The Table was served in a very neat and elegant Manner, and both Monsieur and Madam *de Genneval* acquitted themselves exceeding well, in doing the Civilities of their House. We were five in Company, a Relation of Madam *de Genneval*, made the third Woman ; she was upwards of Fifty, but extremely gay, and told a great many diverting Stories, which had made her pass for a Person of good Sense, had she not unluckily at last fallen upon the Topick of herself, and then began to tire us with enumerating the Extravagancies that several Noblemen her Admirers had been guilty of on her Account, a Fault I could wish my Sex to avoid, especially after they are past a certain Age, and ought to endeavour not to be looked upon as Triflers by their Acquaintance.

A Gentleman, who, I was told, had a Place in the Household, was the very opposite of the Lady I have just mentioned——he could not be more than thirty Years of Age, yet had a sullen Gloom upon his Brow, a Moroseness which tho' almost inherent to Four-score, is scarce even then excuseable ; but seems out of Nature in Youth. This four-looking Gentleman never opened his Mouth, but to contradict what other People said ; but notwithstanding this Difference of Characters, I perceived they all agreed to make me talk, I suppose excited by their Curiosity to learn some Account of my Affairs ; but Monsieur the Count *de Saint Fal*, foreseeing there would be impertinent Inspections of this Kind, had given me written Instructions in what manner to reply to any Questions should be asked me, so that they were little the better informed of any thing they wanted to know.

The Desert was but just brought in, when a Footman whispered Madam *de Genneval*, and she turning toward me, told me, that a Nobleman enquired for me——as I doubted not but it was the Count, I ordered he should

be conducted to my Apartment, and was just rising from Table to go and receive him, but the Servant hearing me mention his Name, assured me that it was not him, but that he guess'd by the Livery it was the Duke *de*—The Name of this Nobleman surprized me, as I had not the least Acquaintance with him. Madam *de Gennerval* perceived it, and presently told me, that if I had any Reasons to avoid his Visit, she would go and acquaint him I did not sup at Home. On which, I answered, that I could not conceive so utter a Stranger as his Grace, could possibly have any Business with me, and I therefore chose not to be seen. She then got up, and desired I would be easy, for I should not be importuned in her House by any Person whatever; with this she went out of the Room, making several Signs to me, which I did not comprehend the Meaning of, nor indeed gave myself much Trouble about.

While she was gone, a thousand Thoughts ran through my Head at once: The Dread I had of the old Marquis *de L——V——* made me sometimes imagine it might be him, and that the Servant had made a Mistake in naming the Duke *de*——at others I fancied it might be some Friend of his Son's, who having traced the Count *de Saint Fal* was employed by that impatient Lover. But I was soon eased of these Apprehensions, Madam *de Gennerval* returned laughing very heartily;—I told you, said she, that we were observed at the Window, she then run on in a long Detail of all those who had looked up at us, and concluded with assuring the Company, that our Charms made a great Noise at Court.—Who doubts it, cried Monsieur *de Gennerval* ironically, every body envies my Happiness in being possess'd of so fine a Woman. You think to pass this for a Jest, replied she, half piqued at the Tone with which he spoke; but perhaps I could give you Proofs of it, would make you more serious——I have just now received Encomiums, which my Modesty wont suffer me to repeat, from the young Duke *de*——, tho' indeed I am not much flatter'd by him, for I know what he said to me was on the Countess's Account——my Account! Madam,

Madam, cried I! How can that be, I am but just arrived from the most distant part of the Kingdom, and have no Acquaintance——that's no Argument, said Monsieur *de Genneval*, interrupting me,——your Ladyship need to be but once seen, to engage a thousand Admirers——I happened to be in the Street when the Court passed by, and found it a Difficulty to answer the many Questions that were asked me concerning you.——I had not then had the Honour of seeing your Ladyship, but now I do no longer wonder at their Curiosity.

Madam *de Genneval* who could never bear to hear another Woman extolled, and being also naturally jealous, did not relish this Compliment made me by her Husband, and it was easy to perceive Envy in her Eyes. It must be allow'd, said she coldly, that the Countess is very handsome in reality; but if she were not so, a new Face is never without its Charms to you Men——don't you remember, continued she, turning to the Company, the famous *Lyonnese* that was here about two Years ago, that made so great a Noise in the World——she was very fair, had regular Features, and an Air of Grandeur——She no sooner appeared in publick, but she drew all the World after her——the charming *Lyonnese*, the beautiful *Lyonnese*, was the whole Subject of Conversation; but the Wonder ceased as she grew more known, and in a short Time grew as unregarded, as those of the most moderate Perfections——So that Novelty is all that now a days attracts the Admiration of the Crowd.

I presently discovered the little Malice of this Story, and the Application Madam *de Genneval* desired should be made of it; but I took not the least Notice of it, nor could any of the Company discern that I was in the least offended, tho' in truth I was much so, and from this Time resolved to enter into no Intimacy with a Woman of her Character.

After she had vented her Spleen in this Manner; Well but, said her Husband, on what pretence did the Duke make his Visit? on which she answered, that he only told her he had seen a very beautiful Lady at the Window, who seeming to be a Stranger, he came to offer his Ser-

vice to her, in case she had any Affairs that stood in need of his Interest or Sollicitation. Madam *de Genneval* added, that she had inform'd him who I was, and that on hearing my Name, he said he was very well acquainted with my Family; and had a great Regard for several of my Relations, and would beg to be introduced to me at a proper Time, since the present happened to prove otherwise.

I am apt to believe, continued she, by the Confusion his Grace was in, when I told him it was the Countess *De Roches*, that he had taken your Ladyship for some little Creature that came here to make her Fortune, as several have done, and that he need no more than shew himself to meet with a favourable Reception. —

This Vanity of Mankind must certainly proceed from the Opinion they have of our Weakness; but, for my Part, whenever I am exposed to Attacks of that Nature, I always make them repent; for I turn all they say into Ridicule, and amuse myself agreeably enough at their Expence.

This, methinks, is not a very commendable Method, said her Husband, for under the Pretence of Indifferency, the Lover has the Opportunity of being listen'd to, and I am sure such an Indulgence cannot be for the Reputation of a married Woman, however secure her Virtue may be: Nor can I think that altogether safe, an unguarded Moment may arrive, and when a Man has the Power of agreeably amusing the Woman he has a Design upon, and he perceives it, he would be wanting to himself, if he did not proceed to greater Freedoms, in hopes of being forgiven them also.

It would indeed have been a matter of Astonishment to me, replied Madam *de Genneval*, if you had not shewn the Prerogative of a Husband in contradicting me, but I must tell you, that if you imagine your Honour at stake, by any Conduct of mine, it is not altogether so prudent to take all Occasions of disobliging me.

Your Understanding is rather to be blamed, said the Gentleman of the Household; I think your Husband gives you daily Proofs of the Confidence he reposes in you, by
allowing

allowing you such unbounded Liberties——Liberties, indeed, that all the World condemns him for.

This stung Madam *de Genneval* to the quick, and she replied with a great deal of Warmth——a Continuation of your Silence, would much better have become you, Sir, than the part I see you have now begun to take in the Conversation; and I desire for the future you will oblige us with your Taciturnity.

As he was far from a polite Man, he answered with a good deal of Severity, and made very bitter Reflections on her Vanity, and the little Reason she had for it, at which she was provok'd beyond Measure; and finding all she could say, could not put a stop to the malicious Volubility he now shew'd he was Master of, upon Occasion, turned to her Husband, and upbraided him with want of Tenderneſs, and even common Decency, for hearing her so ill treated at her own Table, without resenting it——as the Dispute between them threatned to grow very high, I thought it best to take the Opportunity of retiring, which I did without any Ceremony. Monsieur *de Genneval*, was the only Person who saw me go out of the Room, and to shew it was not in the Power of a Family Quarrel, to render him neglectful of what was due to me, he rose instantly, and come after me to lead me to my Apartment: I told him that I was extremely concern'd at what had pass'd, and feared Madam *de Genneval* would not easily be brought into Humour; on which, alas! Madam, said he, your Ladyship is not yet acquainted with her Temper,——she is one of those who in one moment are angry and pleased——she is apt to take exceptions at every thing, but then the least word in Praise of her Wit and Beauty, brings her immediately to herself——'tis owing to a certain Levity of Nature, which has this good Effect, that nobody regards any thing she says, when in the Humour of giving Offence.

I could not however help blaming him, for suffering the Gentleman to provoke her, in the manner he had done; to this he replied, that if she was not a very weak Woman, she would not have seemed to resent any thing he said; My Friend, said he, is a worthy and honest Man,

Man, but of so spleenatick a Disposition, that his whole Pleasure, if it may be called so, is in giving Pain to those, who have so little Discretion, as to be affected with what he says——in fine, the Love of Contradiction, is his distinguishing Characteristic, and when that is known, who, that has any Regard for his other good Qualities, would not submit to bear with it. I yielded to what Monsieur *de Genneval* said, as such a Peevishness could be look'd upon only as a Disease, and therefore rather to be pity'd than resented: tho' at the same Time, it must be confess'd, a Person possess'd of it, is very unfit for Society; and it is usually said of Hypochondriacks, that they *say* a thousand ill-natured Things, and never *do* one; yet I think if what they say puts one out of Humour, it is in Effect doing one an Injury——One meets however with few of this Way of Behaviour in *France*, and those who are of it, are sure to be sufficiently mortified one way or other. An instance of it in this very Gentleman, was given me by Monsieur *de Genneval*, which for the oddness of it, I believe may afford some Diversion to the Reader.

As little as he seem'd inclined to Softness, Love had found the means of gaining Dominion over his Heart: Nothing could have been more enamoured than he had been of a very beautiful young Lady; and was successful enough in his Addresses, to gain not only her Affection, but also the Consent of her Father. Every thing was on the Point of being concluded, and a great Supper made at the House of the intended Bridegroom, to which the Relations on both sides were invited, in order to sign the Marriage-Writings—the Father, and Lover of the Lady, having both of them a great deal of Wit and Learning, recited many curious Passages, but the Spirit of Contradiction, even at this joyful Time, gaining Possession of the Lover's Mind, made him here utter things not very obliging, by way of Argument, to him who was soon to be his Father-in-Law——the old Gentleman however supported it for some time with Moderation, and imagined his own Memory might fail him, 'till at last falling on a Point of Divinity, which he happened to be

a perfect Master of, he would not in the least recede ; the other growing still more warm, the more he was opposed, the Dispute grew so high, that it was not in the Power of any one present to make either of them abate in their Earnestness—the Father to convince the Company how far he was in the right, went home and fetched a Book, which proved he indeed was so ; but the young Gentleman having nothing else to say, disclaimed both the Author and Edition——this Obstinacy so provoked the Father of the Lady, that he flew out of the House without taking any Leave, nor did the other attempt to detain him.——After this their Friends endeavoured to make up the Breach, and the old Gentleman at last consented the Marriage should go on, with this Proviso, that he who desired to be his Son-in-law, should confess he had been mistaken ; but the Friend of *Genneval* could never be brought to it, and not all his Passion for the Lady, nor all the Advantages of the Match, which it seems were considerable, could prevail on him to acknowledge himself in an Error——So the intended Nuptials were entirely broke off, and the Lady soon after disposed of to another, who perhaps might make her much more happy, by being of a less perverse Disposition.

I could not help making some Reflections on this Capriciousness of Nature, and how miserable People, who had the Misfortune to give way to it, made themselves and all about them ; Monsieur *de Genneval* was perfectly of my Opinion, and added, that such a Temper could arise in reality, from nothing but an exorbitant Pride, and that a Person who had any share either of Understanding, Religion, Philosophy, or even common Good-nature, would endeavour with all his Might to curb such disagreeable Sallies on their first Approach ; because, if in the least indulged, they presently grow enormous, and sooner or later were the Occasion of the most pernicious Events. After some Discourse on this Head, in which he discovered indeed a great Fund of Sense and Good-nature, he took his leave, and I shut myself into my Apartment, in order to go to Bed.

Brochan,

Brochan was undressing me, when I heard somebody knock at the Street-door ; as it was very late, I was curious to know what important Affair, had occasioned a Visit to any of the Family ; so went to the Window, and that I might not be seen, made my Servant take the Candles out of the Room. I discovered a Footman holding a Flambeau, by whose Light I saw a tall Man stand at the Door, which was just then opened by a Servant belonging to *Monfieur de Genneval*, and heard him ask if a young Lady, who arrived but that Day from the Country, did not lodge there. The Answer giving him to understand he was not mistaken in the House, he desired to know if I was up and could be spoke with. The Servant who had been present at Supper, when *Madam de Genneval* gave an Account of the Duke's Visit, and heard me say I desired no Company, answered the Stranger, that the Lady he enquired for was not to be seen, especially by Night, and then shut the Door very roughly upon him.

I gave myself no trouble of reflecting on this Accident, not imagining it was any other than the Duke or some Person sent from him, and as soon as *Brochan* had undrest me, went to Bed, and slept with a Tranquility, which I may be ashamed to confess in the Situation I then was.

In the Morning my Waiting-Woman acquainted me that several Trades-People were come to receive my Commands ; I had not in this Juncture, Presence enough of Mind to conceal my Surprise, and asked her if she had sent for them. No, Madam, replied she, but they say they came by your Orders. On this I presently supposed the Count *de Saint Fal* had given such Directions, and bid *Brochan* shew them up. I found they were all Persons who were to make the rich Stuffs I before spoke of into Garments, so was taken measure of for Stays, Gowns, Hoops, and other requisites of Dress.

I believe the Reader will scarce imagine that I could be enough taken up with these Trifles, not to be impatient to see the Count, and hear in what manner the old

old Marquis de L———V———resented my pretended Flight; yet in reality this was the Case———the Splendor of every thing about me, the Homage paid me, the different Contrivances the Work-People offered to me for rendring what I was to wear most becoming quite transported me, and I know not whether I did not for some Hours forget that I was *Jeanetta*, and imagine myself in effect the Person I represented—Even the Marquis whom I loved, and the Marquis whom I feared, had scarce any room amidst the hurry of my Thoughts—all that was of Importance was swallowed up in meer Trifles; things of Nothing, when compared to the Obligations I lay under, and the Dangers to which I was exposed———How shall I excuse this Indolence, this Inactivity of Reason; it is in vain to go about it; and I am perswaded that it is in such parallel Circumstances many of my Sex are led into Errors, which their Inclination would never tempt them to be Guilty of. But I had the Blessing never to be long forsaken by my Guardian Angel, and I look on the many Trials I went through, as a peculiar Instance of the Goodness of Providence; which enabling me to overcome them, makes me clearly see the Dangers to which Vanity exposes our Sex, and also to give them suitable Warnings how they fall into the like, since not one in a Thousand might escape as I did.

It was near Noon, when Monsieur de *Saint Fal* came to visit me, and as he was drest extremely rich, and I had never before seen him to that Advantage, appeared to me one of the most graceful and genteel Men I ever beheld———I considered him, with the utmost Attention, and tho' my Affections were prejudiced in favour of another, could not be so unjust as to refuse him that Place in my Admiration which he deserved.———He now behaved to me with greater Distance and Respect than ever; as indeed all Persons of a delicate way of Thinking, will always do to those on whom they confer Obligations———*Brochan*, being in the Room when he came, he pretended no other Business than to enquire

enquire how I liked my Apartment, and if I had been able to take any repose in a Place to which I had been so great a Stranger ; which I having answered, he would have gone away ; but I would not permit he should carry the Decorum so far, and insisted on his dining with me, to which with much Entreaty he at last consented. As I knew all this was but a Feint, before my Waiting-Woman, and that he could not but have Tidings for me of the utmost Consequence, I made a pretence for sending her down Stairs, and then asked with an Impatience which was not to be wondered at, what I had to expect from the old Marquis, and if there was any probability I could be safe from his Enquiries.

Notwithstanding, Madam, said he, I had strained all the little Wit and Invention I am Master of, to find a plausible Story, for my having been disappointed of the Power of executing his Commission, I am not quite assured it passed current with him——He flew into the extremest Rage I ever saw him in, when I first mentioned your Escape, and afterwards would needs be informed of every Particular. I was not to seek for Answers to all his Interrogations, and mentioned a certain Time and Place, and many other Circumstances of your pretended Flight, and the Pains I had taken to regain you, tho' in vain——seemed as much concerned at the Misfortune as he was incensed, and said as many ill-natured Things of you as my Heart would give me leave, in order to deceive him. The first Emotions of his Passion being abated, he began to question me more closely then before, and under pretence of laying the Blame on my Valet de Chambre, sent for him and examined him in the most artful manner imaginable, but I knew his Fidelity, and as I had before given him his Lesson, had the satisfaction to hear he answered according to it in every particular. After he was dismiss'd, my Uncle appearing more easy, would have me pass the Day with him, and for several Hours talked to me of indifferent Things ; at last, all at once resuming the Subject, Nephew, said he, I am not half so angry at the Disappointment of my Revenge on this Girl, as I am amazed at her Cunning :
——with

——with the Precautions you tell me you took, one would imagine she owed her Escape to some supernatural Means——I begin now to have a Curiosity to see her, and provided she would promise never more to make use of her Arts to seduce my Son, could almost be tempted to forgive what is past on Account of her Wit.

——I still preserved my Caution, and dropt not the least Hint could make him suspect I was prejudiced in your favour——till, unluckily for our Designs, he said, in a seeming careless Manner, tho' doubtless, at least I fear so, it had but too much Artifice, is the Creature so handsome as they tell us? or is it only to her Youth and Subtily she attracts so many Hearts? on which I could not command my Tongue from crying out, yes, my Lord, she is more beautiful than Art can paint, or Heart without seeing her conceive. He took no Notice however of this unwary Exclamation, but went coolly on in asking me concerning your Shape and Stature, and whether you had fair, or dark Hair, with many other Questions, which in that Moment, forgetting the Interview you had with him, I answered with all the Sincerity he could have wished, or I made use of, had I really desired he should no longer doubt if you were the Person he had seen at the Inn.

Pardon me, adorable *Jeanetta*, continued he, I dread to think, what my unwary Tongue may have exposed you to; but to atone for my Fault, be assured, that I will lose my Life, rather than see you suffer any Part of what my Uncle's Resentment would doubtless tempt him to inflict upon you, should he ever, which Heaven forbid, come to a true Knowledge of this Affair.

I must confess I trembled from Head to Foot, during the whole Time he had been speaking; but concealed my Disorder as much as possible from his Observation, and after having assured him, that while I was happy in so generous and disinterested a Friend as himself, I could be enabled to support every thing, I entreated him to favour me with the Result of this important Conversation.

When

When I left off speaking, resumed the Count, I perceived the Marquis in a profound Meditation, after which, or, I am much mistaken, cried he, or, there is no room to wonder at my Son's Affection!

These Words, with the Pauses which preceeded and followed them, reminded me of the Error I had committed, and to retrieve it as much as possible, offered to go in search of you all over the Kingdom; saying, tho' the Girl is exceeding handsome, my Lord, she must not be suffered to impose her little Artifices on a Person of my Cousin's Rank in the World———she must be found, and put in a Place, where her Charms will have no Power of doing further Mischief,———and such like Expressions, which I imagined might take off the Suspicion I feared he began to entertain; but instead of accepting the Service I proffered; no, no, Nephew, said he, you have had but too much Trouble about her already, ——what will be, will be———Fate must have its Course, and I think to give myself no further Concern about the Matter.

After this, tho' I continued late with him, he never once mentioned you, and either was, or affected to be in a very good Humour; but I shall be always on my Guard, and it happens very fortunately, that to-morrow he sets out for *Paris*, and when he is gone, we shall have the Opportunity of contriving what Means will be most likely to secure you from his search, in case what he has said to me be not sincere.

Whatever Apprehensions I was in before, to hear that he was so suddenly to depart, dissipated them all, and I behaved so chearfully on this Occasion, that Monsieur *de Saint Fal* was perfectly charm'd.

To convince him the more that I laboured under no Disquiet, I gave him a Detail of what had pass'd the Evening before, and of the Visit made me at Supper-time by the Duke *de* ——, at which he seemed a little alarmed, especially when I told him that the same Nobleman, as I supposed, had been to enquire for me, or sent some other on that Errand afterwards at a very unseasonable Hour. I perceived his Dissatisfaction, however,

however, and as I thought in Gratitude and Honour I ought to do, endeavoured to dissipate his Vexation by giving him my solemn Promise to avoid all Visits, and the Occasion of them, so far as not even to divert myself at the Window for the future. On this Condescension, as he termed it, he appeared perfectly transported, and confess'd that there was nothing he so much wished, but had not dare to ask, lest I should look upon it as a restraint upon my Liberty, which he was always ready to allow me in the most extended manner I could expect; and if I went beyond those bounds, he should think himself happy in my preserving, yet he would never presume to complain of it tho' he might regret it, and that he said more also for my sake than his own.

After this his usual Tranquility resettled itself in his Face and Behaviour, he entertained me with diverting Stories all Dinner-time, and when Cloath was taken away, told me, that as he was then obliged to leave me, he hoped to be happy enough to pass the next Day entirely with me, and that then he would endeavour to fix my Affairs so as to be pleasing to me.

These Proofs of his Generosity reminding me of the Dependance I had on him for my Support, gave at once a check to my Pride, and a laudable alarm to my Virtue, alas! My Lord, said I, what Opinion will you have of me!——I am in the utmost Confusion at receiving Favours, which I have no possibility of ever returning. Oh, Madam! cried he, interrupting me, 'tis greatly in your Power, infinitely to over-pay all I have done, or am able to do. These Words were accompanied with a Look, which made me tremble for their Meaning, and fully resolved never to derogate from the Rules I had prescribed myself——my Lord, replied I, very gravely, I have already told you, that not all the Grandeur in the World should tempt me from what I think my Duty——and I would much rather return to my native Meanness, or even dare the Fierceness of the offended, the revengeful Marquis, than consent even in a Thought to what would render me unworthy either of Heaven's Protection, or the World's Esteem.

A few Tears, in spite of me, fell from my Eyes, as I spoke these Words, at the Sight of which *Saint Fat* seemed in the utmost Agony ; Pardon me——Pardon me, cried he, most lovely, most adorable of your whole Sex, that I have suffered you even for a Moment to be under any uneasiness on my Score—No, Madam, I once for all, give you my Word and Honour, and desire to be look'd on as the most abandon'd of Mankind, if ever any Behaviour of mine contradicts what before now I have protested to you——I love you indeed——it would be Madness to deny it——you know it ; but what do I flatter myself with from that Passion ; nothing but the hope of serving you, without any other View than that you will allow me to do so——to accept with Chearfulness, and void of Fear, all the Services I have Power to render you, by much overpays my doing them, and is all the Happiness I ask.

On these Conditions, replied I, I accept the Honour of your Friendship, shall rejoice whenever I see you, and make no scruple of reposing in you, the most hidden and dearest Secrets of my Soul. That, indeed, cried he, would perfectly satisfy me——the Effects of Love, charming *Jeanetta*, are various, according to the Disposition of the Person it influences ; and I believe you will find them in me widely different from the greatest Part of Mankind.——I was always of Opinion, that to love for one's own Sake, was no Merit to the Person beloved, the Passion centered in a Self-gratification, and missing it, deserves only a bare Pity ; but where one desires only to make happy the Object of one's Affections, that I think may, without going too far, claim some share of the Friendship, if Love is incompatible with former Engagements, of her one loves——This, Madam, is the sole Aim of the Passion you have inspired me with, and to prove it is so, I will labour as eagerly to promote your Union with the Marquis my Cousin, as he can do himself : And tho' in losing you, I lose all that's valuable in Life, I shall have the Consolation to reflect you are convinced of my Disinterestedness and Generosity.

The Delicacy of his Sentiments raised an Admiration in me, which as I was not able to find Words to express sufficiently, kept me from replying at all. On which misconstruing my Silence, can you doubt my Sincerity, resumed he, you make no Answer to what I say——I fear you think it an impossibility for me to keep within the Bounds I profess to observe——perhaps you think I have some Views——yes, I confess I have, pursued he, rising from his Seat, will you be convinced of what I have said, if I pour forth before you the most secret Motions of my Soul?

I now began again to be alarmed, but resolved to know how far he expected from me——well then, my Lord, said I, what are they? if you really are that pure and disinterested Friend, speak without reserve.——What is it you have to hope?——You ought to know me, and consequently not to flatter yourself, that I shall even in a Wish depart from the Engagements I am under, and which are so precious to me. Ah, Madam! cried he, hear what I have to say, and do not, I conjure you, believe, that under the Veil of Honour and Sincerity any base Designs are concealed——I love and adore it is true, and to merit you, would sacrifice my Rank and Fortune; but would owe the Blessing of being yours, to your own Choice alone, not any Solicitations of mine——Perhaps, had not your Heart been pre-engaged, I might by my Services and Constancy have been thought worthy of your Favour; but as it is, I would not even attempt to estrange you from the first Object of your Vows——Yet, do I confess I have some Views, tho' distant one's——Nothing is impossible to Fate, and there may come a Time, in which to hope your Love would not be a Crime——the Events of Life are various, not that I wish the Marquis should alter the Sentiments he at present has of you, nor that Death should deprive you of him; but if either of these Misfortunes should arrive, might I not naturally hope you might remember with how much Zeal I love you, and in Time be brought to reward it, when you had the Power of doing so without a Crime.

Monseigneur

24 *The Virtuous Villager ; or,*

Monfieur *De Saint Fal* pronounced thefe laft Words with fo great a Tendernefs, that it pierced me to the Soul.——You are not deceiv'd, my Lord, cry'd I, in the Opinion you have of my Gratitude, and had not my Heart been given before I faw you, to one, who you are fenfible deferves much more than I can pay, none but yourfelf could have have engag'd my Wifhes, ——be affur'd, therefore, that next to him, you are the firft in my Esteem.

My Love is too reasonable, answer'd he, not to be content with this Acknowledgment.——I no more will call myfelf unhappy!——Yes, beautiful *Jeanetta*, I afk no farther Return for all my Sufferings, my Cares, my everlafting Services——with thefe Words he threw himfelf at my Feet, and kifs'd my Hand in a kind of Transport. At this Instant the Door was push'd half open, and I heard a Voice, the Sound of which ran through every Vein——I knew, and did not know it——it alarm'd me——I was tranfported and frighted at the fame time——the Words it fpoke were thefe ;

How have I been deceived!——Ungrateful and moft perfidious Maid!

At the fame Instant I heard thefe cruel Words, I faw the Figure of a Man, who in uttering them, vanifh'd from my Sight.——His fudden difappearing, together with the Shade of great Screen, which in Part darkened the Door, hindred me from being pofitive as to the Perfon ; though the Voice, as well as the Exclamation at feeing me with the Count at my Feet, left me no room to doubt, if it were not my dear adored Marquis.——I started up and ran to the Top of the Staircafe, the Count *De Saint Fal*, who doubtlefs thought as I did, was there as foon as I, and immediately jump'd down the whole Staircafe after him ; I found he overtook him, and heard high Words between them, fain would I have gone to prevent any fatal Effect ; but Terror deprived me of the Power, my Feet forfook me, and I muft have fallen down had not a Settee been near me, on which I threw myfelf in an Agony not to be exprefs'd.

press'd. To heighten it the more, *Brochan* came running in, and told me the Nobleman who had just left me, and another whom she knew not, were gone out together, so equally incensed, that she doubted not but a Duel would ensue; on which that Fear which had at first taken away my Strength, now restor'd it with added Vigour, I flew to the Window, and called out to them, as loud as I could, but they were gone too far to hear my Cries; and I turned to *Brochan*, for Heaven's sake, said I, run after them——endeavour to bring them back——or I am undone, and shall lose all that's dear to me in the World;——but instead of obeying my Commands, God forbid, reply'd she, looking on me in a sort of contemptuous manner, that young Women should be seen running through the Streets after such Gentlemen as they are——a fine Character I should have, indeed!——if I had thought I was hired to a Place where such kind of Adventures were like to happen, I would never have undertaken it.

The Confusion I was in at this Moment was such, as I think in no Accident of my Life I ever before experienced——what to do to prevent the Mischiefs that threatened I knew not——were it possible for me to overtake them, said I to myself, my Presence would but increase the Marquis's Rage——he thinks me false——what Influence would my Tears or Prayers now have on him!——Sometimes a dawn of Hope shot itself through the Horrors of my Mind, that the Prudence and Moderation of *Saint Fal*, would prevent any Tragical Event; but it lasted not a Moment, and I again reflected how deaf all kinds of Passions are, and that it was not probable, the Marquis in the first Emotions would listen to any thing could be said——he will doubtless attack his Cousin, the first convenient Place they come at——the other must defend himself——and then!——Oh, Heaven! What then——perhaps, the Marquis——the Count——or both may fall——those two noble Youths;——those who for Love, Friendship, all that's valuable in Man, are not to be equalled in the World——and is it for me, cry'd I,

in a kind of Distraction, for worthless me, that *Lives* so precious must be thrown away?

In this Anguish, I continued walking backwards and forwards in my Dining-Room, when Madam *De Genoval* to compleat my Misfortunes, came in to me, in a manner very different from her former Politeness, and asked me in a very abrupt manner, the Meaning of what she had just now heard? Telling me withal, that her Reputation was unblemished, and it would be worse than Death to her, to have any Accident that might give room for Censure, to happen in her House.

—These Apartments, cry'd she, disdainfully, were not design'd for any Purposes, but what are consistent with Honour; and I take it very ill, that Monsieur the Count *De Saint Fal* should expose me to any thing, wherein my Name might be brought in Question.

I was so confounded at a Behaviour I so little expected, that joined with my other Troubles, it destroy'd in me the power of Speech, and she taking Advantage of my Silence, and, perhaps, confirm'd by it in an ill Opinion of me, continued her Reproaches with so much Malice, that what at first prevented my Answer, now made me give her such ones, as a little abated the Insolence of her Air.——I told her, I thought her impertinent, and that I should acquaint the Count, whom I expected back in a Moment, with the Incivilities I had receiv'd in the Apartment he had chose for me, and where I expected to have been treated with Respect, and that till then, I desired she would retire and leave me to myself.

I utter'd this with so much Spirit, that she could not presently reply, and her Husband coming in that Moment, and hearing part of what I said, asked me with a great deal of Concern, if any of his Family had been wanting in their Respects to me ——I thank'd him in a cool Manner for the Notice he took of it, and perceiving his Wife was going to speak again, went to my Closet and shut myself in, resolved to hear no more of her ill-tim'd Remonstrances.

I now abandon'd myself to Tears and to Reflections.—I look'd on all these Troubles as a just Punishment for accepting the Count's Offers?—Why did I not go into a Monastery, cry'd I? That would have screen'd me from all these tempestuous Hurries, I am perpetually involved in; Love, Virtue, and Reason would then have all been satisfied, my Innocence secur'd, as well as my Reputation.—The old Marquis would have desisted his Persecutions, and the young one had leave to converse with me, when there no longer was any Danger of my becoming a Disgrace to his Family? —Why have I this foolish Aversion to a Cloyster? —Why does my Vanity tempt me to appear in the World? Alas! how dear do I pay for the Admiration I excite, and what Mischiefs do the few Charms I am Mistress of, create to all those who are so unhappy as to feel their Force!——

The whole Afternoon, and part of the Evening I pass in this melancholly Situation, and no Account from *Saint Fal* arrived ———what could my Thoughts suggest, but the most horrid Ideas.——I doubted not but one or the other was no more; and as the fatal Misconstruction the Marquis had put on my Behaviour, I suppos'd would make him think himself under no Obligation to acquaint me with what had happened, I imagin'd him the Conqueror, and that the poor Count had been the Victim to his Jealousy; because I doubted not, but if he still survived, he would have found some way to ease me of the Tortures of Suspense. This Belief gaining Strength in me, made me naturally consider the Consequences of so terrible an Affair ———I doubted not but I should be seized as the Occasion, though a very innocent one, of what my Imagination suggested to me had fallen out, and in such a Case I knew, unfriended as I was, little Favour was to be expected, especially, as it was highly reasonable to suppose, my real Origin, and all the former Accidents of my Life, would then be brought upon the Carpet; and I should not only be hated, but despised as an Imposture.

How natural is Self Preservation!——We may talk of dying for those we love; but few there are who

see the fatal Dart at Hand, would bare their Bosom to receive it.——Not all the Grief I felt for the loss of two such worthy Lovers, could render me forgetful of my own Safety ; and as Flight seemed the only Method of Preservation, I resolved immediately upon it.——

In this Disposition I began to consider whether I should go ;——but the Impossibility of being conceal'd at any Place where I had ever been before, threw unsurmountable Difficulties in my way.——There seem'd nothing safe for me, but to quit *Versailles* by Night, and travel disguised and on Foot, till I got to some Town or Village, where was a Waggon to carry me to *Paris*. There, said I to myself, no body will know me, and I may either be admitted into some Family as a Servant, or take a little Lodging and work at my Needle. Thus did my Fears influence me to a Determination, which ought to have been the Result of my Virtue ; but why do I call what then pass'd in my Mind a Determination ! Alas, it lasted not three Minutes, Plenty, Ease, and the Flatteries with which I had of late been treated, had render'd me too delicate to do any servile Office :——I had forgot how to wait on myself, and was quite incapable of waiting on others, and had my Palate too much vitiated by being accustomed to the *quelque chose* of great Tables, to take up with the coarse Fare I must expect to live upon, when to earn it by my Labour.——In fine, I was grown the Woman of Quality, and could not bear the Thought of descending ; and though the Apprehensions I had of being made answerable for any Misfortune, which might have attended the meeting of the Count and Marquis, yet I could not put in Practice any Means of escaping.

In these Anxieties did I remain till near Ten at Night, at which time my Cook-Maid, who from the first Moment of her coming, took a great liking to me, and was besides very innocent and good-natur'd, came to seek me in my Closet.——I hope my Reader will not think me impertinent, if I give a brief Recital of what pass'd between us at this time, because it happened afterwards to be of Consequence.

Bless

Bless me! cry'd she, do you great Ladies live upon Air———your Supper has been ready these two Hours, yet you have never rung the Bell, nor I suppose once thought of eating———*Jesu Maria!* continued she, looking more attentively on me, you are weeping!———Mercy on us, when such as you find any thing to trouble them———I am rarely fitted, indeed,———my last Lady was always grumbling, and scolding, and throwing things about the House like a mad Fool, and now I have got one that cries like a Child:———Well———every one has their own way;———but among us poor People there are no such Fancies?———Why what now in the Name of Goodness have you to make you uneasy?———You want for nothing———have a fine Lodging and well-furnished———rich Cloaths———a great Income to be sure, and for Youth and Beauty I never saw any thing come up to you.———I wonder what People would have;———but cry your Ladyship's Mercy, added she, with a low Curtesy, I had forgot, I warrant you are thinking of your Husband;———but he is gone, and there's an End of him———don't grieve yourself, dear Madam, for one cold one, there are a thousand warm ones to be had, we live in a Country where, Heaven be praised, Husbands are as Plenty, as the Plagues of a Cook-Maid.

I could not forbear smiling in the midst of my Troubles at the Simile, and the manner in which this poor Creature endeavour'd to give me Consolation, I bid her, however, leave me, and told her I did not intend to eat.———Then I'll fast too, cry'd she, it would not be right at all in me, I'm sure to indulge myself while my good Lady is in Trouble. *Barbara*, for that was her Name, left me with these Words, the Good-nature of the poor Creature affected me very much, and I could not help calling her Back, and bidding her go to her Supper, well then, said she, if you will be so good to eat a little Soup; I'll swear to you by my Guardian Angel, to devour as much as any four People;———but, if you continue in this Mood, I can out fast our Curate, and he is the greatest Penitent in all the Country, and a very

good Man if he did not love Money too well ; if it were not for that, he might have been made a Saint long ago ; but like the rest of the World he loves himself, and, indeed, I think he is not much to blame.

I grew quite impatient with this Babble, and bid her leave me a second Time.—Yes, Madam, reply'd she, without stirring a Step, I see you are very angry, and you must be obeyed—how one may be deceived in People's Countenances !——I could have sworn that you did not know how to frown ; but I see now that you can scold as well as Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*.

——Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* ! cry'd I, hastily, why do you know Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* ?——Know her, answer'd my Maid, yes, indeed, I have reason to know her, I was her Servant once, and had such a Life with her, as I shall not presently forget ;——but, pursued she, are you acquainted with her, Madam ?

I judg'd it would be very improper to own any Concern, I had on this Lady's Account, to this talkative, silly Creature, lest her Folly might occasion her to blab somewhat that might discover me to that cruel Enemy, so only answer'd that I knew her but by Name. So much the better, cry'd *Barbara*, for she is a very ill-natur'd malicious Lady, as her Husband, poor Gentleman, will find I'll warrant him. Is she then married ? said I. Yes, Heaven be praised, resumed she, she is married, and our Village is rid of her. Pray, said I, what is the Name of your Village.—Ah ! Madam ! reply'd she, with Tears in her Eyes, it is called *D*——, and though it is the least in the Forest of *Fountainbleau* ; yet I can tell your Ladyship it is a Paradise on Earth : I shall never be happy till I get into it again, I hope to end my Days there at last ; but we poor Folks must do something to get our Bread ; and thanks to Providence, we are all honest Pains-taking People, all I should say, but one of my Neices, who ran away with a Marquis, and they say has done a great deal of Mischief with her pretty Face ; but I have never seen her since she was little, I was at Service a great way off,
when

when she grew up, so have nothing to answer for what she does.

She had no sooner utter'd these Words than she went out of the Room, and saw not the Confusion I was in, which was, indeed, too great for me to have dissembled before her; ——— by what she said, I was convinced that she was my Father's Sister, so odd a Circumstance, could not but give my Pride a considerable Alarm. ——— Good God! said I to myself, how truly miserable is my Condition! I have lost all the good Will of my Friends, am despised by my nearest Kindred, who tho' never so poor, think me infinitely beneath them, as they imagine, I have forfeited that which alone can make a Woman valuable; and for what have I done all this? ——— Why to be a gaudy nothing! A Toy trick'd and set up to be gazed at and admired for a-while, then cast down much more below even my mean Original, than I am now exalted above; ——— what solid Good has accrued to me for quitting those who gave me Birth! ——— Alas! the incessant Perplexities and Apprehensions, as well as my present eminent Danger, too plainly shews me Heaven is offended at my Vanity and Presumption, and punishes me in the Effects. ——— Had all-directing Providence thought I should have been a fine Lady, I had been born such; and I am now convinced, all People should conform themselves to the Rank from which they sprang, had I done so I had been blest in Peace of Mind, and loved by all who knew me. These Reflections were followed by a Torrent of Tears, which continued till *Barbara*, my Aunt I should say, brought me a small Basin of Soup, which though I had small Inclination, she in a manner forced me to eat.

I behaved to her with more Affability than before, and she was more pleased at it, than if I had given her an *Agnus Dei*, yet she was very fond of Relicks, and had a great deal of Devotion, though not exercised in that precise manner of *Mademoiselle Brochan*, my ill-natured Chambermaid. I durst not, however, enter into any Conversation with her, on the Score of *Mademoiselle D'Elbieux*, nor ask any Questions concerning

my own Family, or what was said of that Niece she had mentioned ; for fear I should not be able to restrain myself enough, to hinder her from taking Notice how deeply I was interested in it, so suffer'd her to depart without asking any farther Speech.

When I again found myself alone, I abandon'd myself to new Reflections——in these Moments I was sick of the great World, and wish'd for nothing more than to return to my primitive Meanness. with my poor Parents ; and while these Suggestions lasted, was two or three times about to call back my Aunt, confess myself to her, and contrive the Means of going with her to our Village ; but the Thoughts how I should be received under the disadvantageous Opinion, I found they had of me, deterr'd me from that Resolution.——I then thought of retiring to a Monastery, and concealing myself, so as never to be heard on more ; but that was impracticable without a Recommendation, and how to get one speedy enough for my Purpose, I could not tell.——Then I thought of going to Madam *De G*——, and, as I could not hope to be secure in her House, entreat she would provide some Place for me ; but I had already been so troublesome to that good Lady, and had created so much Confusion in that part of the Country, that I durst not attempt it——my disturb'd Imagination presented a thousand Projects, which all vanish'd almost as soon as formed, either through the Impossibility there appear'd of carrying them into Execution, or my own Want of Inclination to go about them.

At last, though with an Infinity of Difficulty, and a long Struggle, I resolv'd to go to *Paris*, and try my Fortune in some mean way or other : Having fixed this Determination, I wrote a Letter to the Marquis, wherein I justified myself in as handsome a manner as I could, from what, according to Appearances, he had reason to think me guilty of, and ending with telling him that he should never see me more, since he could bring himself to make any Judgment to my Prejudice, without examining into the Foundation.

I also wrote another to Monsieur the Count *de Saint Fal*, in which I thanked him for all the Proofs he had given me of a sincere and honourable Friendship ; but concluded, with assuring him I was resolved to hide myself forever from all the Tumults which threatned me, in persevering in a Life above me.

I put both these Letters into one Packet, and was just going to direct them, when it came into my Head again, that possibly neither of the Persons they were designed for, might be in a Condition to receive them, and this Imagination threw me once more into Agonies which almost deprived me of my Reason——I then thought I could not quit *Versailles* without knowing the Fate of those illustrious Rivals, and that it was my Duty to run any Hazards rather than be guilty of such an Act of Ungenerosity.

I was in an Easy-Chair, my Face all bathed in Tears, and my Head reclined upon my Hand, when my Aunt came hastily into the Room, bidding me dry my Eyes, for all I feared was happily over——What ? cried I impatiently ; here, resumed she, pointing to the Marquis and Count, who that Moment entered together, here is a Proof, that I tell you no Lies——Heaven be praised, continued she, there's no Mischief done, and the wicked ill-natured *Brochan* will be forced to ask Pardon.

While she spoke, the Marquis threw himself at my Feet ; he took hold of one of my Hands, kiss'd it with a Fervency, which is not to be exprest, and looking up on my Face, would fain have spoke, but was not able——small need he had of Words, however, his expressive Eyes sufficiently informed me of what passed in his Heart, and in them ; I read unutterable Love ! unutterable Joy.

Monsieur *de Saint Fal* continued silent also, leaning on the Back of my Chair, which I had no Power to rise from, nor to pay any of those Respects, which either my Love or my Civility required from me ; but after he had attended the first Emotions of my Surprise ; I always told you, Madam, said he, that my chief Happi-

ness would be in procuring yours, and I think this is now some Proof of what I said——I have brought you back the only Man in the World worthy of your Affection——he suffered himself not to remain three Minutes in doubt of your Conduct, and I had not the least Difficulty to convince him of the Truth——He is now ashamed to think he could be capable of suspecting you, and you cannot in justice resent, but rather pity the Effects of his Passion——you would have known all this five Hours ago, if my Uncle the old Marquis had not met us, and I durst not send any Messenger to acquaint you of what had passed, fearing his Curiosity might tempt him to have the Person followed.

Recover yourself, therefore, Madam, continued he, and enjoy without Disturbance the Happiness of seeing a Lover no less worthy of you, than you of him. To these Words, he added, that he was obliged to return to his Uncle ; but that he would wait on me the next Day ; and then left the Room with a Bow, full of Respect and Tenderness.

I easily saw he took his leave for no other Reason, than to give the Marquis an Opportunity of Discouraging me with the more Freedom : but my Heart was so fluttered in passing from the Extremity of Despair to a contrary Emotion, which the unexpected Sight of a Lover so dear to me, could not but excite ; that I was scarce able to return the Civilities of that generous Friend.

The hurry of Spirits, or to speak more properly, the transport I was in to see at my Feet, the dear adored Man, whom but a Moment before I had believed was mine no more, that I had not presence enough of Mind, even to bid him quit so uneasy a Posture——at last, overwhelm me not, my Lord, I beseech you, cried I, with this Excess of Tenderness ; for tho' mine for you may claim some share of it, yet it ill becomes me to see you thus. No, my dear, my forever adorable *Fa-netta*, replied he, I'll never rise till that charming Mouth has pronounced a full Pardon for the Crime I have been guilty

guilty of——I confess I have committed the worst of Outrages against you in my Thoughts——I was base enough to believe you capable of Perfidiousness——I imagined my Cousin in possession of your Heart——I gave myself up to all that Jealousy could suggest——but I acknowledge I have been to blame——Excess of Passion hurried me to Extremities, which nothing but the Moderation and Prudence of my Cousin, could have prevented from being fatal to one or both of us

O, what have I not suffered in these Apprehensions, said I, sure the Terrors of my Soul can be equal'd by nothing, but the Joy of seeing you, and finding you convinced how little possible it is, I can have one tender Thought for any of your Sex, but yourself. The Blushes which accompanied these Words, seemed to the Marquis to be some Remains of Resentment in me——again, he begg'd me to forgive him, and would not be prevailed upon to rise, till I had vowed to think no more of what had pass'd, as to what concerned that which he was pleased to own, had been a fault in him; but at the same Time, added, that I thought myself under an indispensable Necessity of entreating his Forgiveness in my turn; for having given room for Suspicions, which must have been unavoidable to any Heart truly affected with Love. Forget, therefore, I beseech you, my Lord, said I, the Anxieties my Behaviour has occasioned you. I know I ought not to have opposed your Father's Orders, but submitted to my Fate, and suffered the Count to have conducted me to a Cloyster, rather than have accepted any Proofs of his Friendship, which must naturally expose me to the Censure of the World, as well as your Lordship's Suspicion of my Conduct——to all this, pursued I, what Defence can I make, but that the very Inclination you have inspired, enforced me to Things which for a Time, made me seem unworthy of yours——Yes, my dear Marquis, a Cloyster had for me uncommon Horrors, because it would have separated me for ever from you, and I chose to run the risque of losing your Esteem by some Indiscretions, rather than yield to the cruel Certainty of seeing you no more.

The Marquis pressed my Hands with an Extremity of Passion, at my saying these Words, and seating himself near me ; no, my charming *Jeanetta*, said he, I have nothing to accuse you of——Despair and Ruin had been my eternal Lot, had you acted in a different Manner——my Father would have shut you up for Life,——he had taken such Measures, and his Orders would with such Exactness have been obeyed, that if you had fallen into his Hands, I must infallibly have lost you for ever——This I was informed of but since I left *Lorrain*, an old Servant of the Marquis's, seeing my very Life at Stake, betray'd it to me, on which I took Post immediately, and arrived at Madam de C——'s, but a few Hours after my Cousin in Quality of an Exempt had taken you thence——Judge to what an Extremity of Despair I was reduced, when I found you were gone——that good Lady was truly touched with my Condition, and it was from her I learned that it was *Saint Fal*, who had been entrusted with this Commission ; but she engaged my Word of Honour to keep the Secret inviolably : Had she not taken that Precaution, I should have extorted the Secret from him, where he had placed you, tho' I had lost my Life——I met him in my return to *Versaille*, as you have doubtless heard, but could not behave to him with the Candor I had been accustomed——the Spies I placed about him discovered his coming here, and also that a young Lady, an entire Stranger at *Versailles*, lodged in this House——I presently imagined it could be no other than yourself, and call'd last Night to enquire for you——being convinced he had disobeyed my Father's Orders ; what Motive could I impute it to but Love !——your remaining at *Versailles*——the Change of your Name——these Lodgings——all conspired to turn my Brain——I thought I was betrayed——I reflected on the Merits of my Cousin——your Youth——the little Prospect of your being ever united to me——your being subjected to the Power of him you were with, made the dreadful Chimera of your eternal Loss seem real——I watched him myself this Morning, and saw him enter, and immediately

mediately after I asked for you——a Woman pretty well advanced in Years, who I find waits on you, refused to carry in my Name to you, telling me she was certain you would see no body but the Count *de Saint Fal*, who had taken the Lodgings for you, and was now alone with you, and she did not think proper to interrupt you——all this was delivered in a certain Tone, which served to encrease my Despair; yet as in all Misfortunes, Suspense is the most terrible to be borne, I resolved if possible to come at the Certainty, and offered her ten *Lewis d'Ors* to discover to me what she knew——the Present was greedily accepted——she told me with a Sneer, that you pass'd for a young Widow, was called the Countess *de Roches*, and that Monsieur the Count *de Saint Fal*, was continually with you, she supposed to give you Consolation for the Loss of your Husband. To this, she added many insidious Reflections, which I will not shock you to repeat, and of her own accord, proffered to conceal me in the House where I might see you together.

Here I could not forbear interrupting the Marquis, by desiring to know what a Servant could say of a Mistress with whom she had lived but two Days? to which he answered, that he was at that Time too much confused to give any great Attention to the particular Words she uttered; but that all she said tended to let him see she took me for a Woman who was come to Court under a feigned Pretence, and had in reality no other Business than to make her Fortune if she could Pardon me, dearest *Jeanetta*, cried he, perceiving I was ready to weep at the Recital of such cruel Aspersions——mean Minds will always imagine every one like themselves——I am more to blame to listen to what she said——but every thing conspired to make you seem guilty——this Woman's Discourse——*Saint Fal's* Visit——my finding him at your Feet——hearing his Expressions——your not seeming to resent what he said——O, who but, like me, must have yielded to the Suggestions of Jealousy and Despair!——I do not say I ought to have been so credulous, but I plead the little Possibility there

there was for me to have been otherwise at such seeming Testimonies.

He ended these Words, with all the Marks of the most tender Affection that ever was, and from this we talked no more of what was past, and I suffered myself to be pleasingly enchanted, while his melodious Tongue flowed with all that Love and Wit inspired——the Clock striking One at last rouz'd me from this delightful Lethargy, and I reminded him, that a Person of his Sex staying so late in my Apartment, might give the malicious *Brochan* room for fresh Impertinencies. After so long an Absence it was some difficulty to part, but we consoled ourselves with the Thoughts of seeing each other again next Day, he kiss'd my Hand at parting, but looking tenderly on me, as tho' he passionately longed for a farther Confirmation, that he was not indifferent to me ; I presented my Cheek, but with so many Blushes, and unaffected Confusion, that he might easily perceive it was the first Favour of that kind I had ever granted to any Man, and the Transports he was in at receiving it, were such as assured me he was convinced it was intirely owing to the Sincerity of my Passion.

The many Reflections which attended this Day's Adventures, would not suffer me to enjoy much repose that Night ; but as the greatest Part of them were pleasing, were far from giving me any Fatigue——I grew more composed however towards Morning, and fell into so sound a Sleep, that I awoke not till two o'Clock ; nor perhaps had not then done so, had not my good-natured Aunt *Barbara* been a little surprized to find I lay so long, and called me several Times : She told me, that the Count *de Saint Fal* had been to wait on me in the Morning, and I could not but admire the Respect he treated me with on this Occasion ; for she said she would have brought him into my Bedchamber, but he refused it, answering that he would not for the World take the Liberty to disturb my Repose ; we have not a great many Examples of such Modesty——the Marquis, now my dear Husband, has since confess'd to me he should not have behaved with so much Moderation.

I took this Opportunity, however, of remonstrating to my Aunt, that Decency required she should suffer no Man to come into my Chamber when I was in Bed ; and as she had made *Saint Fal* the offer meerly through Simplicity, and no bad Intention, what I said to her on this Subject, made her extremely careful for the future.

It was near Dinner-Time when the Marquis came in, if possible he appeared more amiable in my Eyes that Day than ever : His Dress was exceeding rich, and so well fancied that one would have imagined he made the ornamenting his Person his whole Study, tho' in truth no Man ever did, or does, consult it less ; the Satisfaction in his Countenance arising from our last Night's Conversation, no doubt added to the Lustre of his Eyes, and gave his Features an additional Softness—the Tenderness with which we met may better be conceived by those of my Readers who have generous gentle Souls, than express'd by any Words I am able to make use of ; and for the harsh and unsusceptible Part of the World, it gives me little Concern, whither they approve or not of the soft Emotions with which the Breasts of those who are capable of a perfect Passion, are filled, when in the presence of the dear Object, equally loving and beloved.

He asked me, without doubting it, a thousand and a thousand Times, if I were perfectly reconciled to him, and I as often assured him that I was——How swift the Moments passed, the Clock had struck Four, yet I never thought of Eating, and I believe should have suffered the whole Day, to elapse in the same manner, if my Aunt, who could by no means approve of Fasting, had not reminded me of the Hour. The Marquis made an Apology for having been the occasion of this Delay ; but I told him that the only way to atone for it, and punish himself, was to stay and content himself with Part of what was prepared for me——he was too much pleased with this Invitation not to comply with it, and *Barbara* was ordered to serve up Dinner immediately——we had no want of a third Person to fill up any Chasm in Conversation, we had enough to entertain each other with ; and after the Cloath was taken away,

I let him into the Secret of the near Relation my Cook-maid had to me, at which odd turn he could not avoid being a little surprized, but commended my Prudence in concealing myself from her Knowledge for the present ; I then gave him the Detail of all that had befallen me since our separation——related to him the Histories of *Saint Agnes* and *Lindamine*, and dwelt so strongly on the Misfortunes of the former, and the cruel Restraint she was under, that he assured me in Consideration of the tender Friendship he found there was between us, he would employ all his Interest to procure a Dispensation from her Vows.

From this the Conversation turned on Monsieur *de Saint Fal*, and I had reason to see the Greatness of this amiable Lover's Passion, by the Pain it gave him, while I made a full and sincere Recital of all that young Nobleman's Behaviour, not omitting, as far as I could remember, the most minute Circumstance or Word that pass'd between us, from the Time of his taking me from *Madame de G——*'s to the preceding Day.

I had the satisfaction, however, to observe that it was not in the Power of all his Jealousy to prevent him from doing justice to the Count's Merits ; he even went so far as to say, that his Honour was so much to be depended upon, that tho' he knew him to be his Rival, yet if the Necessity of our Affairs required it, he could not be uneasy if I were yet more in his Power than I already was. I told him with a Smile, that there was something owing to me also, and that he ought to rely no less on my own way of thinking, than on that of his Cousin. He answered, that he never had a Doubt of it, but in those hurrying Moments, which I had promised to forget ; and added, that he flattered himself, that beside my Virtue, I had a softer Defence in favour of him, which would enable me to resist all Attacks made to his Prejudice. I made no reply to these Words, but gave him a Look, which sufficiently gave him to understand he had not been deceived in his Conjectures.

I then asked him, if he could with as little Difficulty give me an Account of his own Adventures and Behaviour
since

since I saw him? Alas! reply'd he, what Account have I to give my adorable *Jeanetta*; but a long Series of Perplexities, Hopes, Fears, and all the natural Consequences of Absence, from the only Object of my Affections.

Take Care, my Lord, said I, with half a Smile, lest you swerve from your usual Sincerity, when you tell me you were involved only in Cares for me——the fair *Lorrainers* I am apt to believe had a different Opinion of the Situation of your Heart, than what you now would seem to represent.

Ah, cry'd the Marquis with the same good Humour, *Dubois* I suppose, has been tiring you with the Adventures *Lorrain* abounds with, and has brought me in for a Share, perhaps, to find how far it would affect you.

A good Turn, indeed, my Lord, answer'd I; but that shall not prevent me, from insisting on a Detail of what happen'd to you, during your Stay in that Country.

You must then be obey'd, my dear *Jeanetta*, said he, though what I have to inform you of, is little worthy your Attention. On my first Arrival a profound Melancholy seized me, I seldom went abroad but to Divine Service; I grew pale, wan, my Strength and Appetite decreased by swift Degrees, and *Dubois* fearing I was falling into a Consumption, was continually importuning me to take the Air, and see Company; but finding me averse to his Proposal, and that I every Day grew worse, sent without my Knowledge for a Physician, who being come, my officious Valet told me, that in spite of the Resolution I had taken to hide myself from all the World, I could not hinder myself longer from seeing Company, and that a Gentleman who called himself *De Mourtray*, was come to visit me; I was afraid he had been impudent enough to invite People in my Name, and began to chide him in so severe a Manner, that he was obliged to confess it was only a Physician, whom he thought it very proper I should consult.

As

As *Dubois* had done this, I was obliged to order *Monfieur De Mourtray* should be admitted, and was a little peevish at the Thoughts of being compell'd, as it were, to listen to the affected Jargon People of his Profession usually entertain their Patients with ; especially, as I imagined I stood in no great Need of his Prescriptions ; but how agreeably was I deceived, when instead of a formal Coxcomb, as I expected, I saw enter a Man perfectly gay, facetious, and well-bred.——After the first Civilities were over, and he had in an easy Manner ask'd me some few, and those not impertinent Questions, concerning the State of my Health, instead of Physick he propos'd a Party of Pleasure ;——told me I had no manner of Occasion to keep my Chamber——that whatever Ailment I laboured under was of the Mind not the Body ; and it being a very fine Day, his first Prescription was, that I should favour him with my Company to a small House he had about a League and a half Distance :——To induce me to accept his Invitation, he said, I should meet with some agreeable People there ; and added with a Smile, that fine Women and good Wine were the best Remedies in all Hypochondriac Cases.

I was so taken with his Good-humour and easy Manner of Address, that I obliged him to stay and dine with me, and, indeed, the diverting Passages he entertain'd me with, gave the Repast a double Relish to my long depraved Appetite.——In the Evening we went, as he had desired, to his Country-House, and found some very good Company of both Sexes ; the Men were perfectly polite, and the Ladies far from awkward, as some People represent them ; on the contrary, their Dress was well-fancied, and their Conversation as free from all manner of Stiffness and Affectation, as those at *Paris*.

It was this obliging Physician, which first reconciled me to appear in Publick, and give and receive Visits ; but when I had begun to do so, my Acquaintance soon grew pretty extensive, especially after the Arrival of a young Gentleman, with whom I had been extremely intimate ; and though a *Lorrainer* by Birth, he
finish'd

finish'd his Studies at the same Academy at *Paris* as I did ; and there appear'd so great a Parity in our Sentiments, that during his Stay we had been very seldom a-sunder. Judge how much I was pleas'd to meet so agreeable a Companion, the many Diversions in which he would always make me a Sharer. It was that chiefly enabled me to support so long an Absence from my charming *Jeanetta* ; among the many Ladies he brought me acquainted with, was *Madam De Chareé*, whose eldest Daughter he was passionately enamour'd with——she is, indeed, a most amiable young Creature, and has so great a Resemblance of you, that I never look'd upon her, but with Pleasure mix'd with Pain.——*Saint Alu* asked whether I approved his Choice, and I answer'd in Terms, which very much flatter'd the Judgment of this young Lover.——In fine, his Adresses were encouraged, and a short time put him in Possession of his Wishes.——In about a Week after their Marriage, the Bridgroom gave a magnificent Ball at his own House, to which most of the Nobility and chief Gentry were invited.——I need not tell you I was not omitted, after having given you an Account of the Intimacy between us——indeed, I heartily congratulated his good Fortune, as I look'd upon her as a Lady of very great Merit, and every way qualified to preserve the Passion her Beauty had inspir'd ; and went that Evening to his House with a Chearfulness, which did not afford the least Presage of what was to follow ; and that a Time set a-part for Jollity and good Humour, should be the last of our Friendship, and I much fear of his Happiness, or that of his Lady.

Indeed, my dear *Jeanetta*, I never think on the Accidents of this unhappy Night without Trouble, and could gladly be dispensed with, from ever mentioning it ; but as 'tis probable you may hereafter hear it from others, and, perhaps, related in a Manner very different from the Truth, there is a kind of Necessity you should know it, as it exactly happened.

This Affair, continued the Marquis, is of so delicate a Nature, that I know not well how to relate it, nor,
indeed,

indeed, am well convinced from what Motive the Occasion of it arose.——I assure you my Condition is very hard : I am formally accused of having violated all the Laws of Honour, Hospitality and Friendship——Appearances are against me——my Innocence is my sole Defence ; and Malice fails not to interpret every Thing to my Disadvantage ;——before I enter into this little History, I therefore conjure you beautiful *Jeanetta*, to recollect the former Part of my Behaviour, in order to assure yourself, that the latter could not justly incur your Displeasure.

These Preparations with which the Marquis usher'd in his Story, made me impatient to hear it ; and the Pains he took to persuade me to be of his Party, seem'd to promise something extraordinary. I was twenty Times about to tell him, that if I was to judge of the ensuing Matter, all he said would only give me Reason to think I ought to pass Sentence against him ; but as this would have delayed the Satisfaction of my Curiosity, I remain'd silent, that he might have the Opportunity of prosecuting his Discourse, which he did in these Terms.

“ The vast Concourse of People at this fatal Ball, said he, made the Room extremely hot, and being a little tired with Dancing, I quitted it in order to breathe a little of the fresh Air ; and also to contemplate on my adorable *Jeanetta*, who in the Eyes of my Imagination, far outshone all the Beauties of *Saint Alu's* Circle. I walk'd some few Turns in a fine Walk of Jessamines behind the House, and being about to return to the Company, not doubting but by this Time I should be miss'd and enquir'd for ; I came into the House by a Back-Door, which was somewhat nearer than the great Gate ; in my Return I pass'd through a Room which had a Bed in it, with the Curtains close drawn, prepared, as I afterwards heard, for a Person who was intended to lie there that Night ; as it had not been used as a Lodging-Room, a great Fire, notwithstanding the Warmth of the Weather, was made to air it, which was all the Light was in it.——The Change of this Apartment,

ment, which I had before been well acquainted with under a different Form, made me stop a little to consider it, and that Instant I heard the Curtains move a little, and a Groan from the Bed: I started and listned, then said, who is there? And presently a Voice, which I knew to be that of Madam *De Saint Alu*, answer'd, 'tis I, my Lord, for Heaven's sake, come to my Assistance, I am fainting away.

I ran hastily to her, but before I could ask, or she give me any Account of this sudden Indisposition, the Door opened, and *Saint Alu* came in.—He started back at seeing us.—Heaven! cry'd he, I am betrayed! —False Woman! Perfidious Traitor! This Reproach, and the Occasion of it, took from me the Presence of Mind requisite to make an Answer, and my Silence, I suppose, confirming him in the Opinion of my Guilt, he went on railing in the most bitter Terms that jealousy could suggest.—When I had enough recover'd my Surprize, as to speak, it was too late; he was not to be appeased, and had we not fortunately left our Swords in the Ball-Room, one or both had doubtless fallen a Victim to this Misunderstanding.—I endeavour'd to persuade him to be easy that Night, and not expose himself and me to the Company, who could not but hear us, offering at the same to give him any Satisfaction, he should require the next Morning;—but he was deaf to Reason, and it soon after happened as I expected;—several Ladies and Gentlemen came in upon us, and were Witnesses of a Scene sufficient to give room for Censure.—Madam *De Saint Alu* on her Knees, weeping bitterly.—her Husband storming, myself in the utmost Confusion,—every one was officious in attempting to make up this Breach; though it was easy to be seen, most of them had their Zeal excited by their Curiosity of knowing the Bottom of the Affair.—Thus was all the Diversion of the Night broke off:—I retired very much perplex'd in Mind, and I heard afterward, that *Saint Alu* loaded me with the most opprobrious Names his Rage could dictate; all was in Confusion—and all the Company
broke

broke up, and went to their respective Houses, to judge, and talk as they pleased on what had happened.

When this now unhappy Pair were left alone, the imaginary injured Husband, threat'd to kill his Wife if she did not confess the whole Truth of what had pass'd between us ;—she terrified beyond Measure at his Rage, and the dreadful Imprecations he had made, told him that it was only a foolish Piece of Superstition that had given him this Cause of Jealousy :——You know, said she, that my Lord Marquis amuses himself with Cabalistical Operations, and I permitted him to take off my Garters, for a certain Experiment of bringing me good Fortune.

This poor Lady thought herself very Politick in framing this Story, which, indeed, being a very foolish one, look'd the more natural ; it succeeded, however, so well on her side, as to pacify her Husband so far, as to make him consent to live with her still ;——he thought her innocent, though weak ; but me he never could forgive, as believing I must have some farther Design in my Head, or I would not have propos'd untying a Lady's Garters.

For my Part, when I heard this Story, as I did the next Day from several People, who were acquainted both with him and me ; I knew not in what manner to reply to it, to say the Lady had utter'd a Falstity I thought would be unmanly ; but never could be able to find out why she made so frivolous a Pretence, instead of the real one.

From this Time I never saw *Saint Alu*, and because I would not give any Reason for his continued Suspicions of me, avoided every Place where his Lady visited ; notwithstanding I am inform'd they lead a very ill Life together, and that seldom a Day passes without her suffering from his Reproaches.

Here the Marquis gave over speaking, and I reply'd with a Seriousness, which I was not able to dissemble, I am not all surprized at the Jealousy of *Saint Alu* ; for how innocent soever you might be of any Intention to wrong him ; I cannot say, and think I may do so
without

without being too censorious, that his Lady acted a very indiscreet Part.——Accidents like this, indeed, might possibly happen——a Woman may be taken suddenly ill ;——but then to throw herself on a Bed, and call for Assistance from you, when doubtless her own Servants were in hearing——her saying no more of it afterwards, and the Pretext of having her Garters untied, had in it something not quite so decent, as one should expect from a Woman of strict Virtue.

My Lover I found had little to offer in Vindication of the Lady's Conduct ; but made so many tender Asseverations of the Integrity of his own, that I could not avoid giving Credit to what he said. He confess'd that he was far from blaming the Resentment of *Saint Alu* ; but on the contrary pity'd him sincerely, and seem'd with me to fear, this would not be the last Subject of Complaint he would have against his Wife.

After this we fell into Discourse of what was more material to us both——I hinted to him the Disquiets I labour'd under, on Account of the Obligations I had to the Count *De Saint Fal* ; and told him, that I thought it would be better for me to take Shelter in a Convent, notwithstanding the Aversion I had express'd to it, than to be expos'd to Temptations, which I was not certain I should be able always to resist.

The Marquis listened to me with great Attention, and seem'd very pensive, while I continued to represent the Dangers my Virtue run ; and as a Proof of the Truth of what I said, related to him the Visit intended me by the Duke *De*——the Construction put upon it by Mademoiselle *De Geneval*, and her Behaviour, as well as that of *Brochan* to me the Day before. Besides, added I, should your Lordship's Father, by any unexpected Means happen to discover me, I were lost forever ; he would infallibly put the *Letter de Cachet* in Force against me, and I should be confin'd for Life, whereas by a voluntary Retirement, I avoid all these Dangers, and shall be at Liberty to reflect on what has past, and wait with Patience my future Fate.

Having

Having mentioned all that I thought necessary on this Subject, I was silent expecting his Reply, which was to this Effect, that he was perfectly sensible of the Truth of what I said, and that he would consider seriously on the Affair, and hoped to find some Expedient, which I should approve of to ward me from all the Dangers I apprehended without going to a Convent. Concluding with a most solemn Protestation, that he was too nearly concerned in every thing that regarded my Peace of Mind and Reputation, not to be ready to assist me in any proper Measures for the Preservation of both.

We talked near two Hours I believe on this Affair, without being able to come to any determination ; but he assured me he would not rest, till he had found some method to satisfy all my Scruples ; after which he took his leave with every Mark of Affection, that could be given by the most passionate and faithful Lover, as indeed he was, a long Experience having now convinced me, that in all he said to me his Tongue never swerved from the Dictates of his Heart.

The Pleasure which the Ardency of his Affection afforded me, banished for a Time, all other Emotions from my Breast—I grew elevated, and in spite of all the Impediments that lay in my way to such a Station, I flattered myself with the enchanting Idea of being one Day the Marchioness *de L———*. After some agreeable Reflections on this Score, I bethought myself of the Letters I had written the Day before to the Marquis and Count *de Saint Fal*, and went to the Place where I laid them, intending to read them over, and see what in these violent Emotions of Grief and Despair, my poor tormented Heart had dictated ; I searched not only where I thought they were, but also in every Place where I imagined a possibility of finding them ; but could see nothing of the Packet : I could not help being a little surprized and uneasy at the first, but afterwards recollecting, that no body had been in the Room, but the Persons to whom they were directed, I was convinced that one of them must have committed the Robbery, and was not displeased at it.

I wish'd indeed that it might prove the Marquis who had been the Thief; because in those Letters I had so lively demonstrated the Love I had for him, the Terrors I was in for his Safety, and the Uneasiness I was under at being compelled to receive Obligations from any other Person than himself, that I thought it might contribute greatly to induce him to provide for me without my seeming to desire it; for as he had talk'd of making me his Wife, and had never by any Word or Action given me Cause to apprehend he had any other Intentions, I could receive Favours from him without any of those Scruples, which must naturally arise on the Effects of Generosity from Persons less interested for me. If on the contrary the Curiosity of *Saint Fal* had induced him to take them, he would only thereby have found, that I had Gratitude and Honour, without any tenderer Sentiments, than what were consistent with the most inviolable Affection for his amiable Cousin; therefore which ever of them, or both, had seen what I wrote at a Time when it could not be supposed, I had the Power of disquising my real Thoughts, or any further Interest in doing so, could not but enhance the regard that each were already possess'd of in my Favour.

I had not the Pleasure, however, of having my Curiosity satisfied; the next Morning I received a Letter from the Marquis containing, as follows:

To my Souls everlasting Comfort, the
dear, the faithful, and most adorable
Jeanetta.

I N C E S S A N T Disappointments are sure a Lover's Portion, I flattered myself with passing this Day, and many succeeding ones with my Charmer, uninterrupted by any Fears; but I have now the Mortification to tell her, that the Commands of the Marquis de L——V—— oblige me to attend him to Paris, where I must stay at least the remainder of this Week——I obey with the less Reluctance, as I have some Affairs to dispatch there, which the Accomplishment of, will be agreeable to her who

takes up all my Thoughts——be not therefore impatient for my Return——be assured that in Absence you are ever present to my Mind, and that even Sleep takes you not a Moment from me——I have many Things to say, but have not Time for any more than to conjure you to depend entirely on the Love and Honour of him who never can be but in all Events,

My dearest JEANETTA,

*Your most truly devoted and
passionate Lover,*

De L——V——.

It would be needless to go about making any Description of the Satisfaction this Letter gave me, I shall only say it well attoned for this enforced Absence, and filled me with so many delightful Contemplations, that to indulge them, I resolved to shut myself up in my Apartment, till the dear Author of them should return. But this was but the determination of an Hour, I could not refuse seeing the Count *de Saint Fal*, I owed too much to his Friendship and Generosity to deny him the only Reward he proposed for all his Civilities, that of seeing and conversing with me, so revoked the Orders I had given.

Madam *de Genneval*, who was now brought into Reason, by the Remonstrances of her Husband, would scarce keep an Hour out of my Apartment, endeavouring to make me forget her late Behaviour by an Excess of Civility, which she sometimes thought to heighten by the most fulsome Flattery——as she perceived my Disposition inclined to Gaiety, she proposed my making one in a Party of Pleasure ; she told me one of Monsieur *de Genneval*'s Friends, belonging to the Board of Works, had promised him a fine Barge, in which we were to go up the River *Seine*. When she made this Invitation the Count *de Saint Fal* was present, and offer'd to accompany us, so that I was too earnestly pressed to take the Air in this agreeable manner to refuse, even had my

my Inclinations been averſe, which with my uſual Sincerity I confeſs were far from being ſo.

Nothing could be more delightful than this little Voyage, *Monſieur de Saint Fal* ſhewed us the *Menagery*, *Marly*, and *Meudon*, and I found ſo much to admire in theſe Palaces, that I grew extremely impatient to ſee *Verſailles*, and indeed a Perſon of leſs Curioſity than myſelf might well have been deſirous of viewing the inſide of a Place, whoſe exterior Beauties had ſo much charmed me.

After this we went into the Park, where were a great Number of Nobility waiting to ſee the King, who that Day happened to come pretty late ; at length his Maſteſty appeared, and by his Preſence gave a new Luſtre to all the illuſtrious Aſſembly. *Madam de Genneval* made me turn my Eyes on a very graceful Perſon, who had his continually fixed on me, and who ſhe told me was the very Duke who on the Day of my Arrival had deſired leave to viſit me. This gave me ſome Apprehenſions ; I deſired not his Acquaintance, and the Probability there was, that he would join Company with us to gain an Opportunity of ſpeaking to me, made me propoſe going home much ſooner than I ſhould otherwiſe have done ; my Deſires were too much a Law to thoſe I was among not to be immediately complied with, and we quitted the Place.

I muſt own I was glad to find myſelf again in my own Apartment, without being accoſted by a Perſon, whoſe Character and Quality might have brought me into Adventures, not to the Advantage of my Reputation, which together with the freſh Air, gave me ſo good an Appetite, that I ſat down to a little Repaſt I had ordered to be prepared againſt our return, and entertain'd my Gueſts, which conſiſted of the Count, *Monſieur*, and *Madam de Genneval*, with as much Chearfulneſs, as tho' I had no Lover's Abſence to lament, no incenſed great Man in ſearch of me, no Parents who gave me over for loſt ; in fine, as if I had nothing at Heart but how to divert myſelf, and make my Moments agreeable. *Saint Fal* was perfectly tranſported to ſee me in ſo gay a

Humour, and seemed very loth to depart; but it growing late, and perceiving Monsieur *de Genneval* and his Wife were preparing to take their leaves, he did so too, not to injure Decorum, nor give any one the Liberty of Censure; and indeed I must do him the justice to acknowledge, never Lover behaved with more Respect to a Mistress, as much above him in point of Rank and Fortune, as I was in reality his inferior in both.

The next Day the same good Humour remained with me, a perfect Indolence, or rather a Forgetfulness of all that ought to give me Pain possess me, and even Hopes and Fears subsided. How easily, Alas! are we enchanted with a Life of Pleasure! Madam *de Genneval* came into me to pay her Compliments, and my Tirewoman, whom I had ordered to attend me, cut my Hair, I all the time looking in the Glass—I fancied I looked extremely amiable, and being drest went into my great Room, which affording me a fuller Prospect of myself, I could not help thinking that such a Form as mine might very well become a Title, and that no body could blame the Marquis for being desirous to bestow upon me that which he was born to. I hope my Reader will pardon this Vanity in me, which I so freely confess, and which has cost me much pains to humble.

After Breakfast Madam *de Genneval* asked if I would accompany her to see the King at Mass; and I readily accepted the Proposal, having as I said before a great desire to be a Witness of the interior Ornaments of a Structure so magnificent; besides, as I believed the old Marquis *de L——V——* and his Son were both of them at *Paris*, I ran no great hazard of being seen by any body who knew me.

As she told me it was Time to go, I made no hesitation, but followed where she led; we pass'd by the Apartments of the Comptroller of the Househould, and through the little Galleries which lead to the Castle. I was surprized to find we met with very few People, and could not help expressing what I thought on this Occasion to Madam *de Genneval*——O, said she, we are not come yet to the Court, your Ladyship will soon

soon find yourself amidst a number of Admirers ; for all our young Nobility are so of every new Face ; this brought to my mind the Story she had told me of the beautiful *Lyonese*, who at her first coming to *Versailles* had been so much followed, and afterwards as much neglected ; but I regarded not the little Envy of this Woman, nor had much time to reflect upon it, for we presently arrived at the Prince's Gallery, and thence past into the Apartments, where I found enough to banish all other Considerations from my Mind——the Magnificence of every thing I saw——the Height of the Building, the long and spacious Vista's which opened themselves to my View which way soever I turned my Eyes, and vast Concourse of People, put me into such a Consternation, that had not Monsieur *de Genneval*, who luckily for me happened to be there, and offered me his Hand to conduct me the way I was to go, I should have ran I know not where.

Madam *De Genneval* perceived the Confusion I was in, and could not forbear laughing, had it not been for her Husband, who reminded her she was not now at Home, I believe she would have rallied me loud enough to have been heard by the Courtiers, who indeed took sufficient Notice of us without ; but I soon had an Opportunity of laughing at her in my turn, and if I had been as malicious as herself, did not want sufficient to mortify that Vanity which she suffered sometimes to surmount her Good nature.

I have already said she pretended to be well known, and have a great deal of Interest at Court, an Occasion now shew'd how much she deceived others, and perhaps also herself in this Point, by saying it so often. As we were walking, the Doors flew open, and the King appeared with the Cardinal going to Mass——every Body followed, and we among the rest——Madam *De Genneval*, with an Air of Familiarity, and an Assurance of being admitted, scratch'd at the Chappel-Door, which a Centinel immediately open'd half way, and said there was no Room——She told him her Name, and insisted on a right of Entrance ; but he clapt the Door upon her

as a Person of no Consequence——She was ready to burst with Spite, and ventured to scratch again, but he cry'd I have already told you, Madam, you can't come in——pray do not be troublesome——with these Words he was going to shut the Door again, when I advanced ; and whatever was the meaning, I know not, but he stretch'd out his Hand, and at the same Time cryed to her, pray, Madam, make Room——on this I came nearer, and he let me in with a low Bow, and the poor mortified Woman, was obliged to say she belong'd to me, in order to get Admittance : But this was not the only Vexation she endured——there was but one Place left upon the Forms, which was given to me, and she was oblig'd to stand the whole Time——I offer'd her my Place, indeed, but she would not accept it, telling me that People used no Ceremony in the King's Presence.

During the Time of divine Service, I cast my Eyes about, and was charm'd to behold with what Piety the Nobility in general attended the Prayers——no Whifpering——no ridiculous Civilities to each other——each seem'd collected in himself, and wholly taken up with heavenly Ideas, but I have since found, that all this was but in imitation of their royal Master, who was no less distinguishable by the Fervency of his Devotion, than by that Air of Greatness, which is inseparable from him.

Mass being over, I was so taken up with admiring the many curious Objects, that presented themselves to me in this fine Chappel, that I believe I should have remain'd there 'till every body was gone out, if a Hand taking hold of mine, had not reminded me it was time to go out——I thought it was Madam *De Genneval*, and answered without turning about, when presently she gave me a Pull by the Sleeve, and said——Madam, I beg your Ladyship will reply to my Lord Marquis——these Words made me indeed recover from my Renservy of Admiration, and I immediately saw it was the Father of my Lover, who was standing close to me——never shall I forget the Confusion of this Moment——to find the Person I had so much Cause to dread, and who

I believed at *Paris*, was still at *Versaillss*, and so near me, gave a universal Trembling to my whole Frame, and I was once or twice ready to sink.

Fortune, Madam, said he, more favourable than you to my Wishes, has once more brought me to the Sight of a Lady, whose Charms are too deeply engraven in my Mind, not to be easily recollected; and tho' you were cruel enough, to disappoint the Endeavours, I would have made to render myself worthy of your Acquaintance, when I saw you before, it shall not now be in your power, to hinder me from doing you all the Services your Merit demands.

As much as I strove to conceal the Trouble I was in, the secret Emotions of my Soul could not escape his Penetration——what is the meaning of all this, Madam? cried he, is my Presence always to give you Pain?——for Heaven's sake, inform me what private Reasons occasion my being so unfortunate. In speaking this he look'd me full in the Face, as tho' he expected a sincerer Answer from my Eyes than Tongue. I was so confounded that I knew not what I should have said, but Madam *De Genneval* whose talkative Humour was at this Time of Service to me, prevented my replying, by saying, O! her Ladyship can have no Reasons for avoiding such a Person as the Marquis *De L—V—*, any Woman would think it an Honour to be taken Notice of by so polite a Nobleman. I am infinitely obliged to you, Madam, answered he, and shall be yet more so, if you can prevail on this beautiful Creature to think as you do.

In this Instant a Person who seem'd to be of great Distinction, by the Respect every one paid him as he pass'd, came up, and whisper'd something to the Marquis, on which he left us with a low Bow, and accompanied the Courtier.

Every one may imagine how glad I was to be eas'd of his Presence, though I had no room to hope where I lived would now be a Secret to him; I presently cast about in my Mind for Means of escaping, and knew very well the Count would assist me in it, as soon as he should be told of this Adventure. I was strangely surpriz'd

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priz'd also, when I reflected on the the young Marquis's Letter; and as I found the Journey to *Paris* had been put off, had a right to be alarm'd at his not having acquainted me with the Motive, either by Visit or Message.—I was so bury'd in these Contemplations, that instead of turning towards Home, as I left the Chappel, I wander'd back toward the Royal Apartments; and know not how far my unwary Feet might have transgress'd, if Madam *De Genneval*, who as I found afterward, had been all this time talking to me, without my observing her, had not taken me by the Arm, and ask'd me if I intended to stay all Day at Court. On this I perceived the Error, which my hurry of Spirits had made me guilty of; and having turn'd back was amazed to find, what a Progress I had made through the Apartments.—I now follow'd her with as much haste as I could, and finding Chairs at the Bottom of the Stairs, threw myself into one, and directed where to be carry'd; as they were moving me off, I heard a Voice cry out, run——run——and beg her to stay; Madam *De Genneval*, who heard it as well as I, stopp'd the Chair, and told me the same Nobleman, who had accosted me with so much Civility in the Chappel, was coming down the great Stairs, and desired to speak with me.—What will now become of me!——all my Fears redoubled——I doubted not but I was discover'd, or at least strongly suspected for the Person I really was.—I had not power to speak, even to invoke Heaven's Assistance, in so perilous a Juncture.—In the midst of my Terrors, the old Marquis came to the side of the Chair; I must not suffer you, Madam, said he, without taking Notice of my Confusion, to make use of that Chair:——Mine is here, and will better become you. He ended these Words with taking hold of my Hand in order to oblige me to remove; I might have made some Excuses, but all my Presence of Mind forsook me, and I made the Exchange without being able to utter one Word. And he continued, you will now, Madam, go Home with more Ease, and after Dinner I will beg leave to visit you;——I reflect with Pleasure on the happy Moments

ments I past, when I had the good Fortune to meet you on the Road, and have ever since languish'd for a Repetition of them——you were then pleas'd to express no Dislike to the Conversation of Persons of my Age, and I hope you are still in the same Mind.

Doubtless the manner in which I now behav'd, would have made him think I was very ill-bred, had he not had secret Reasons not to be astonish'd at it——with a great deal of Difficulty, however, and a faulting Voice, I at last forced myself to thank him for his Civilities, and to tell him that I should think myself honour'd with his Visit.

The Chair moved off as I had spoke; but afterwards putting out my Head and looking back, I perceived he was talking with Madam *De Genneval*, and that they seem'd very earnest in Discourse; if any thing could have added to my former Shock this certainly would; for I had all the Reason in the World to believe, from the Humour of this Woman, that she would mention the Count *De Saint Fal*, as the Person who took the Lodgings for me; and also the Encounter which had been between him and the young Marquis, which if he were not already convinced I was *Jeanetta*, would infallibly make him so; these dreadful Ideas accompanied me Home, and I would have given the World, to have found either the Count or Marquis there at my Return, but was told neither of them had been to ask for me; but in spite of this vexatious Accident, and the Cares which surrounded me, I found some Satisfaction in receiving a Letter from my dear unfortunate Friend *Saint Agnes*.——I broke it open with an Impatience answerable to the Love I had for her, and read these Lines.

To my faithfully beloved, and faithfully loving Friend, the beautiful *Jeanetta*.

Dear and amiable Companion,

I Never valued myself so much on any Thing, as the Choice I made of you to be the Partner of my bosom Secrets—
 I thought from the first Moment I saw you, that you were of a Soul wholly composed of Generosity, but I have the happy Experience that what I felt for you was not a partial Liking, but the result of a true Discernment—
 How unhappy should I have been had I found myself deceived! And how transported am I to be ascertained of the contrary—Yes, my dear *Jeanetta*, I am no less pleased with your Sincerity, than I am with the Effects of it—the lovely *Lindamine* gave me the Proofs of your continued Friendship, the very Day she arrived, and I have now those of the Constancy of my dear Husband—your kind Endeavours have had the wished Success—my Letters reached the Hand of *Melicourt*, and I have received an Answer from him, that he will be with me very shortly, to convince me that his Affection is unalterable—
 I should have wrote to inform you of this, the very Moment I knew it myself, but till I had the favour of yours, I was ignorant how to direct you—As soon as *Melicourt* arrives I shall tell him to whom, and by what means I had the Opportunity of acquainting him his faithful Wife was still in being, and that I am certain will readily induce him to wait on you at *Versailles*, and give you all the Particulars of what we have to hope or fear; for, my dear *Jeannetta*, my Fate is yet in the Balance—
 How it will be determined Heaven only knows—but this one Thing I am certain of, that if I am condemned to end my Days in a Convent they will be but few—
 Sweeten therefore the bitter Moments of Anxiety by your endearing Letters, I beseech you—You, alas! know but too well the Distractions of Suspense, not to pity mine, and afford me all the Consolation in your Power, while
 this

this terrible Situation continues. Lindamine, whom I have now made acquainted with your History, and who has the greatest Tenderness for you, desires the same Favour, —her Treatment here is such as her Merit demands from all who know her, and every Body contributes all they can to dissipate her Melancholly, tho' after all I find she receives the most Consolation in her own Piety, and sure never Woman was possess'd of more — Acts of Devotion — nay of Mortification, I mean what to others would be so, are to her a Pleasure — and she seems better satisfied with a Fast Day, than some of us are with a Festival — In fine, the whole Convent are in Raptures with her Virtue, a convincing Proof of which she has given in resisting a beloved Lover, such as Bellizay. By some means he found out her Retreat, and committed numberless Extravagancies with the hope of prevailing on her to return into the World.

The Rashness of his ungoverned Passion found some Excuse among those of us who have not forgot to love, but the others were so much incensed, that had he not retired on the Remonstrances of a neighbouring Convent, whose Superior is some way allied to him, I know not what Complaints might not have been made against him in the Ecclesiastick Courts. His Despair was such as greatly affected the fair Cause of it; but by her admirable Sense and Resolution, she surmounted this severest Trial our Sex can undergo — Would I were capable of imitating her Example — but 'tis in vain to attempt it. — Adieu, my dear, dear Jeanetta, I expect to hear from you with an Impatience, which can be equalled by nothing but the Affection that occasions it, and which will never grow cooler, while there is vital Heat in the Bosom of her, who is,

With the most perfect Sincerity and Zeal,

Sweet JEANETTA,

Your devoted Friend,

SAINT AGNES.

P. S. *If you would bind me yours more than I am already, omit not giving me an exact Account of every particular relating to your Affairs ; as, I trust in Heaven, Melicourt, will shortly do of mine to you Once more farewell.*

I read this Letter over and over with a satisfaction which only a true Friendship is capable of inspiring—it was indeed so great, that while thus employed, I felt not my own Cares, and for a time forgot the Dangers I was in——my Apprehensions might perhaps have had a longer Truce, but for Madam *de Genneval*, who came in and revived them all.

How reserved you were, said she, not to own you had any Acquaintance with the Marquis *de L——V——* it seems he knows you very well. He may do so, answered I, dissembling my Confusion, but then his Lordship has the Advantage of me, for till you told me I was ignorant of his Name. How, resumed she, with an Air of Surprise, did he not meet you at a Village as you were prosecuting your Journey to *Versailles*. Yes, said I, perceiving he had acquainted her with this Particular ; but he might have told you that it was but by Accident, and that we saw each other but for a short time. Ah, Madam, resumed she, he said that to avoid his Inquiries you quitted the Inn before Day-break——so his Curiosity remaining unsatisfied, I suppose occasioned his asking me a great many Questions——but really, Madam, pursued she, your Ladyship has been so very reserved to me, that I was able to give but an imperfect Account of any thing relating to you, and was obliged to content myself with assuring him, that he had no Reason to doubt of being informed of all he desired to know from yourself.

My Aunt *Barbara* was then serving up Dinner ; which broke off a Conversation wholly disagreeable to me, Madam *de Genneval* retired and I sat down to Table, tho' any one may believe with little inclination to eat—Never was Distraction of Mind greater than mine was

at

at this Time——I am now at Liberty, said I to myself, am attended, am Mistress of my own Table; but Heaven only knows in what manner I may be served to-morrow, or where disposed;—perhaps insulted, upbraided both for what I am, and what I am not guilty of, by the inexorable old Marquis, who now but counterfeits a Complaisance to make the Indignities he designs to offer me more grievous——O, where is his Son?——shall I never see him more——what can have hindred him from letting me know the Journey to *Paris* was put off,——and where *Saint Fal*; am I abandoned both by Friend and Lover, at a Time when more than ever I stand in need of their Advice and Assistance?

These terrible Reflections kept me from knowing even that I was at Table; but my poor *Barbara* with a great deal of Tendernefs, and as much good Manners as she was Mistress of, reminded me, and begg'd I would at least taste of what she had provided——to get rid of her Importunities I forced myself to swallow something, and telling her I should perhaps have a better Appetite at Night, she took away the Cloath, and I withdrew to my Clofet, and shut myself in, that I might give myself up to Tears and Complaining.

The End of the SEVENTH PART.





THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR,
VIRGIN'S VICTORY.

P A R T. VIII.



BELIEVE there are none of my Readers, but will allow I had sufficient Cause for Apprehensions, yet after having given Vent to my Sorrows, I did not, however, give myself over for lost.——Happy are they whose Misfortunes happen in their Youth, when Nature is in perfect Vigour, it throws off all Ills as well of Mind as Body, without any other Assistance than its own; and if a small thing depresses for a Moment, a smaller yet elates.——I am very certain that now, though I am not old, I could not feel the Weight of any one of the numberless

less Vexations, which are the Subject of these Memoirs, without sinking under it.——But to return——

I began now to flatter myself, that my Fears had painted the Danger of the old Marquis's Acquaintance with me, in Colours stronger than the reality——reflected that he could not be certain, I was that *Jeanetta* whom he so much hated; that at the worst he could but have entertain'd a bare Suspicion of it; and that the best Step I could take in so nice a Juncture, was to behave in a Manner which should take away all Probability, I was the Person he was in search of. While this dwelt in my Thoughts, I endeavour'd to assume a Serenity of Countenance, that I might receive him when he came with a Politeness and Chearfulness, that should appear wholly unconcern'd; I was just about settling myself to act this Part, when it came into my Head; that there was a Possibility his Son might come while he was with me, and that to see him there, would infallibly confirm his Suspicions. This Considerations brought back all the Anxieties I had so lately banish'd, and the Terrors of such a Meeting, put me upon contriving Means to prevent it——all that I could think on was to write immediately to the young Marquis, acquaint him with what had happened to me, and desire him, if he design'd to see me that Day, to retard his Visit till pretty late at Night.

After fixing on this, I was not long in putting it in Execution, my time would not permit me to write much, but what I said was to the Purpose; but having finish'd my Letter, a new Difficulty started up, which was how to get it deliver'd; *Barbara* I knew was faithful, but then I should run no less Hazard by her Simplicity than I should have done by the Treachery of another, so resolv'd to trust no-body to be the Messenger but myself.

I therefore order'd a Chair, but having never heard where] my dear Marquis lodg'd, I ask'd the Men, if they knew the Marquis *De L——V——*, who told me they did, and would carry me thither. I bid them stop at the Door, and sent in him that seem'd the most proper

proper of the two to deliver a Message, with my Letter, strictly charging him to give it into his own Hand; but the Agitation I was in, made me forget the most important Precaution, nor had I time to reflect I had done amiss, before the Fellow return'd, and told me, that my Lord Marquis was at Table; but one of his Men was gone in to acquaint him. As I had no Design of speaking to him in so publick a Place, where I saw Servants continually hurrying backward and forward, I bid the Chairman go in again, and send my Letter up, and then return and carry me Home.——He was just going to obey me when I saw *Dubois*, on which I snatch'd it out of his Hand, and call'd that Valet to me. Never was any Surprise equal to his, at the Sight of me.——He look'd stedfastly on me for some Moments without being able to speak, and I believe the great difference of my Dress, from that I wore when he last saw me, join'd to meeting me in a Place, where of all the World he could least have expected I should come, made him at first a little doubtful if it were me, or some one who resembled me that called to him.——My speaking a second time, however, assured him of the Truth, and as I held the Letter to him, Ah, Madam! cry'd he, what is the meaning of this?——to what Dangers do you expose yourself——how happens it that you thus run an your Destruction?——My Master is at *Paris*, and if it be him you want, as without all Question it is, some Accident or other has deceiv'd you;——the old Marquis lodges here, and all is discover'd if you appear. O Heaven! said I, what is it I hear——you may be certain, indeed, that I never design'd my Letter for him. Fly then immediately, resum'd he, for my old Master will be here this Minute——he has been told a handsome Lady waits for him, and he has too much Complaisance for all who are so, to make you stay long——I tremble for fear he should come before you are gone.——

On this I called out to be carry'd Home, but one of the Chairman, imagining I should stay, was out of the way; the Terror I was in, made me order the other

to open the Door, chusing rather to walk to my Lodging, than be catch'd in this Visit by the Marquis; but the Fellow, rather than lose his Fare, would needs run and search for his Partner, so that his Obstinacy took from me the power of making my Escape; *Dubois* being called away as soon as he done speaking to me.

In fine, my Lord Marquis accompanied by the Duke *De——*, the same who had been to visit me, and was refused by *Madam De Geneval*, and several other Noblemen, came into the Hall, and my Chairmen being order'd to carry me in, I was compell'd to introduce myself to all this Company. The Marquis no sooner saw me, than with an Air of Satisfaction——good God! *Madam!* cry'd he, why have you done me the Honour to prevent a Visit I ought to have made before, and which nothing but the good Company you see here could have retarded: As he spoke these Words he took me out of the Chair, and I suffered him to lead me up Stairs with a Consternation, which it is utterly impossible to express.

When I reflected on what the Marquis must think, to find a Woman who had taken so much Pains to fly from him on the Road, and who had betrayed so visible a Confusion at seeing him in the Morning, now come to seek him in his own House, and testify an Impatience at meeting him again, I was ready to sink every Step——without doubt, thought I, if he does not know me for *Jeanetta*, and by that Knowledge penetrate into the Cause of my being here; he must look upon me as a very bold and also ignorant Creature, and, indeed, in spite of the Apprehensions I was in on his Account, I had such a Respect for him, that to suffer in his Opinion was almost as dreadful to me, as all that could have happened on my Discovery.

As we pass'd through a Gallery that led to the Marquis's Drawing-Room; *Dubois* placed himself in my way, and put his Finger on his Mouth as a Signal to me, that whatever Questions I should be ask'd to confess nothing: And I think this Valet's Caution inspired me both with Prudence and Assurance; for by the time we were—

were got into Room, I had recollected how to behave, and so well dissembled the secret Confusion I was in, that I believe it was not at all visible in my Countenance. As soon as we were seated, if I had known who you were, my Lord, said I, addressing myself to the Father of my Lover, I should not have omitted waiting on you the Moment I arrived at *Versailles*, with my grateful Acknowledgments, for the kind Concern you were pleased to express for my Illness, when Chance gave me the Honour of meeting your Lordship at the Village. O! Madam! reply'd he, when Beauty and Merit such as yours suffers, it becomes a general Concern, and I am very certain no Man in my Place, but must have been sensibly touch'd at your Indisposition; all that I can say is, that none could be more so than myself, though in some, perhaps, it might arise from different Motives. I was then at a Loss to comprehend the meaning of these last Words, though afterwards I found the *Ænigma* solv'd in a manner, which at that Time was far from my Imagination.

All the Company added to the Compliments made me by the Marquis, and I was praised in a Fashion so flattering to my Vanity, that all the Trouble of Mind I was so lately in, vanish'd by Degrees, and I sat with all the Indolence and Unconcern of a Person who had nothing to think on, but how to make herself admired.

——In fine, I appear'd so gay, so chearful, and answer'd the polite things said to me, in so easy and unaffected a manner, as charm'd the whole Assembly. The Duke De——asked me if it were in his power to be any way serviceable to me at Court; on which I answer'd according to the Story *Saint Fal* had framed for me, that I did not doubt but I should have Occasion for Advocates in the Affair which brought me to *Versailles*.

——I told him, that my deceas'd Husband had spent a handsome Fortune in the Service of his Country; and that I had some hope of being thought worthy of a Pension sufficient to support me in a Monastery, where I design'd to pass the Remainder of my Days. I had no sooner mention'd a Monastery, than the old Marquis and

and all present exclaim'd against my taking such a Resolution.—— Every one offer'd me his Interest for the Success of my Suit ; but said it should be on Condition I would banish all Thoughts of shutting myself up ; and each seem'd to vie with the other, which should say the finest things to me on this Occasion : Indeed, for a young Person, born as I was, to be treated in this Fashion, by Persons who next to the Princes of the Blood Royal, were of the greatest Quality in the Kingdom, was almost enough to make the Brain grow giddy. It was happy for me, that none of them thought of asking in what Regiment my Husband had been ; for had that Question been put to me, I should have been extremely at a Loss what to have said, the Count *De Saint Fal*, not thinking of my ever being in such a puzzling Circumstance, having forgot to give me any Instructions on that Article ; but this not happening, I came off very well in a Conversation, which it was a thousand to one had not involv'd me in the greatest Confusion.

After about an Hour's stay, I rose in order to take my leave ; but the Marquis oblig'd me to sit down again, telling me he could not resolve to lose me so soon, and that he had something to propose to me, which I must not refuse to grant him. There is a Play to-night, Madam, said he, which, perhaps, you have not seen : It is called *Iphigenia*, and is a Piece much celebrated : As it pleases all the World, I doubt not but it will be an agreeable Amusement to you, so beg you will favour us with your Company, as we all intend to go. I endeavour'd to excuse myself as being a Widow, in which State I said, I look'd upon it as a Breach of Decorum to appear at any publick Diversion ; but this over Nicety as they term'd it, only served to make them laugh, they told me that my Dress denoted the time allotted for Mourning was over, and besides I was not known, or if I were, we did not live in a Nation scrupulous about Trifles : Nay, said a young Nobleman, as you intend to sollicite the Court for a Pension it would be highly proper you should be seen, that it may be known.

Known how very much you merit all the Favour that can be shewn you.

Certainly, added the Duke *De*———, and I will take upon me to declare even before his Majesty, that a Widow distinguish'd by so many Charms ought not to be refused.——— I will become your Solicitor to-morrow, added he, and if I do not obtain in three Days Time a Grant of your Petition, I will be content to suffer the greatest of all Punishments, that of being banish'd from your Sight forever.

This was spoke with an Air so passionate and tender, as made all the Company immediately give him to me for a Lover, and many gay and witty things were said on the Occasion; on which I quitted my Seat a second Time, and told them I must beg leave to go Home; for it would be highly improper for me to be seen at the Theatre, without another in Company of my own Sex. I foresaw this Objection, cry'd the Marquis *De L*———*V*——— hastily, and have therefore sent my Chair for the Lady you live with, I know her very well, and that she will be transported at the Honour of accompanying you——— and thus, Madam, continued he, re-placing me with great Respect, all the Difficulties you can possibly raise are now removed.

How could I answer to such polite and pressing Entreaties, but with Assent, and that being granted, there remains yet one thing to be agreed on, cried the Marquis, and that is, who shall usher these Ladies to the Play——— I am too far advanc'd in Years to acquit myself of that Piece of Gallantry with any tolerable Address, besides it is the Time of my waiting, and shall be too near the King's Person to do it. All that were present then made an Offer of their Service, and said they should think themselves highly honour'd to be so employ'd; but the Duke *De*———, on Account of his Quality, was the Person pitch'd upon by the Marquis *De L*———*V*———; who thank'd him for the Distinction, and said he would send to the *Exempt* on Guard, to provide us Places. No, replied the Marquis, your Grace shall be spared that
Trouble

Trouble——I have here *Dubois*, the notable Agent of my Son's Amours, he shall go, as a Person very intelligent in the Service of the Ladies. These Words, and the ironical Tone they were pronounced with, put me into such a Confusion, as I then wonder'd the Speaker did not observe; but alas! he knew better than I did how to dissemble his Thoughts, and seem'd not to examine me in that Moment. And the other Noblemen doubtless attributed my Blushes to my Modesty, and indeed the Flatteries they bestow'd upon me were sufficient to countenance that Opinion.

Dubois having been called for, came into the Room, with a certain Timidity in his Air, the Meaning of which I could very easily comprehend: He doubtless thought the Marquis had discovered me, and that he was summon'd in order to answer to what should be ask'd him, concerning the Intercourse between his Master and I, but the Cloud upon his Brow immediately vanish'd, when he found us all in Good-Humour——the Command given him however by the Marquis, of procuring convenient Places at the Theatre, seem'd to renew his Astonishment, and he appear'd so stupid, that he was oblig'd to repeat the Message twice over before he well understood——to hear indeed that I was going to the Play, on the Invitation of the old Marquis, was indeed matter enough for his Surprise, and I could not help smiling to myself at the Perplexity he was in.

Madam *De Genneval* came in that Instant, and her so seasonable Arrival, turning the Eyes of the whole Company upon her, prevented any one from taking Notice either of *Dubois* or me.

By what I had seen of this Lady, and the Experience I had of her Volubility, I imagined she would now be a great relief to me, in this Conversation: I doubted not but she was able to answer the whole Company round, but how much are we deceiv'd by Appearances, I then first found what I have since a thousand Times observed, that those who seem to have most Wit among People of their own Rank, are most at a loss when they come before their Superiors——Never did any thing appear
more

more ridiculous than she did, by aiming at seeming particularly well bred ; it might perhaps afford some Diversion to my Readers, if I made a Description of the Pains she took to be thought a fine Lady, but it is a Piece of Ill-nature I cannot allow myself, tho' at the same Time I find a Temptation to do it.

The Marquis *De L——V——* mingled but little in the Conversation the rest of the Company held with her, but kept his Eyes fix'd on me, with an Attention which renew'd my Fears, and made me imagine he was forming some Contrivance with Regard to me, I remembered what he said at the Inn, while he believed I was in a Swoon, *that he had infallible Means of discovering who I was*, and was almost certain in my Mind, that he had not deceiv'd himself with a vain Conjecture ; I was the more confirm'd in this Apprehension, as he never mentioned one Word to me concerning the Discourse we then had together, and as I had often been told, he was a Man not only of the greatest Penetration, but Reservedness also, it seem'd to me as if he had secret Reasons, for acting in the Manner he now did.

These Considerations made me a thousand Times in a Minute repent that I had consented to go to the Play, ———the Dangers I ran by it, represented themselves now to me in the most glaring Colours———I knew not but the young Marquis might even return that very Day to *Versailles*, might come to the Theatre, and if so, how impossible would it be, I thought to myself, for either of us to contain the secret Emotions of our Souls, from being so far visible in our Faces, as not to make a Discovery of the Truth, even tho' it yet remained a Mystery : But the matter was now too far gone, and it was impossible to avoid whatever Destiny attended.

Dubois being returned, with an Account that the *Ex-empt* would take care of our Places, the Duke presented me his Hand to lead me down Stairs, the Marquis walk'd on the other Side of me, and Madam *De Genneval* followed, led by a young Count. You will make a great many Conquests, to-night, I am sure, Madam, said the Marquis ; but remember, that, tho' a thousand should

fall Victims to your Eyes, you are already in Possession of a Heart, no less devoted to your Virtue, than your Beauty, and that a constant Perseverance in Love and Respect can alone merit your Return.

I am infinitely oblig'd to your Lordship, answered I, for so kind a Caution, but am in little Danger of receiving any Impressions of the sort you mean. A Time will come, resumed he, or I am much deceived, when you will find you have indeed Reason to think I am your Friend in this Advice; but as to Love, Merit, Constancy, they are Points on which I beg leave to have a little Discourse with you after the Play is over. I have much to say to you on these Subjects, and do assure you, I have some Uneasinesses for you on more than one Account.

What could I think of this Discourse? it seem'd to contain an Enigma, which the more I endeavour'd to penetrate, grew but the more obscure——fain would I have reply'd, but knew not in what Manner, nor durst ask an Explanation, for fear of rendring myself suspected.

——He said many more things to me, equally ambiguous, but the Duke De——who took them all as Gallantry, still taking up the Word as the other left off, saved me the Necessity of replying. When we reach'd the Hall we found Chairs there ready to receive us: I was put into that which seem'd the gayest, and which I afterward heard belong'd to the young Marquis, and Madam De Genneval, into that of the old Marquis. Soon after we had left the House, Dubois, who had waited in the Street for that Purpose, came running up to the side of the Chair, and said to me in a low Voice; for Heaven's sake, Madam, how came you thus to throw yourself into the Acquaintance of our crafty Lord——you will stand in need of all your Wit to pass long upon him, for what I perceive you pretend to be. I then gave him a brief Account of the Accident which had occasion'd it, on which he agreed, that after meeting the old Marquis at Mass, my Behaviour was natural enough; and, added, that neither my Lover nor the Count De Saint Fal, had any Opportunity of apprizing me that the old Marquis did not go to Paris; because,
said

said he, he accompanied them about a Mile from *Versailles*; then seem'd on a sudden to change his Resolution, and came back, leaving *Forfan* his own Valet with his Son, and obliging me to return with him, in Order he told me to perform the Office of that Valet; and as for my own Part, my Lord having not acquainted me that you were at *Versailles*, it was not in my power to give you any Intelligence.

From hence we both concluded, that the pretended Journey and the Return of the old Marquis, together with his exchanging Servants with his Son, was all done with a View to make some Discovery concerning me; and that *Forfan* being entirely devoted to his Master, it was wholly impossible, for either my Lover or *Saint Fal* to write to me, without Danger of being known to do so by that watchful Spy.

Dubois, however, gave me the comfortable News that he expected both his Master and *Saint Fal* that Evening, and I then hoped to be extricated from all the Perplexities I was now involved in; yet as the Affair was of the utmost Consequence to me, I could not help being frightened, and said to *Dubois*, that in case his Lord should not come back, I would have him get me a Post-Chaise, that I might make my Escape from *Versailles*, the Moment the Play was done——No, Madam, replied he, be easy at least 'till to-morrow; for I am positive the young Marquis will be here to-night——and you may then concert Measures——but in the mean Time be cautious what you say to my old Lord.

By this Time we were got to the Door of the Theatre, where the Duke *De*—— waited to receive me, and as soon as I was placed began to entertain me with Discourses, which at another Time, would have been greatly flattering to my Vanity: From me he went to Madam *De Genneval*, and paid his Compliments to her in a very respectful Manner; he had formerly had some Acquaintance with her, and he took this Opportunity of renewing it, in hopes through her Means to have the more free Access to me, I suppose taking her to be much more in
my

my Favour than she really was, tho' Decency obliged me to behave to her with Complaisance.

While they were talking together, I had Time to consider the Place I was in, and the illustrious Company it contained, for in spite of all the Terrors I was in, I could not help being very much taken with Shew and Grandeur; I look'd at the Ladies, examined their Faces, their Dress and Shape, and was not a little mortified, to find that tho' my Glass, as well as the Opinion of all that had seen me, had inform'd me my Beauty could not well be excelled, yet there was an Ease, an undescribable somewhat, in the Air of these Court Ladies, that gave them Charms infinitely more striking than Complection, or Regularity of Features——indeed my Vanity wanted this Humiliation, and as I knew it a Fault in me, was not sorry, when I came to consider, for its Correction.

The Presence of the King, who came that instant in, broke of these Reflections, and the Play beginning at the same Time, took up all my Attention. As I had never seen any Representation of this Kind, it had the more Effect upon me: The Distress of *Iphigenia* melted me into Tears, and where the Lover complain'd, the Idea of the Marquis came into my Mind, and I thought there was a kind of Parallel between the Thoughts of the fictitious Hero of the Drama, and him who was the Sovereign of my Heart. The Duke could not help smiling to see how much I was affected, and after telling me he was pleas'd to find I had a Soul susceptible of Tenderness; How happy, said he, would be the Fate of a Lover, who could draw such precious Tears! these Words made me a little ashamed of the Softness I had shewn, tho' I ought not to have been so; for I think those who are not touch'd at a well wrought Fable, will not greatly compassionate real Woes.——I endeavour'd however to throw off my Concern, and answered with as gay an Air as I could possibly assume; whenever, said I your Grace becomes enamoured, in my Opinion, you will deserve little Pity, who are so insensible yourself of the Misfortunes of the lovely *Iphigenia*. Oh Madam! reply'd he, how little do you know my Heart, if I seem now indif-

ferent to the Distress the Stage presents us with, it is only because the tender Passions of my Soul are only devoted to you, and were *Iphigenia* a thousand times more unhappy, and more lovely than the Poet would make us think, she could claim no share in a Heart, entirely filled with your Idea, and has no room for any thing in which you have not a Share.

This Declaration was made with so much Seriousness, that I thought a modest Silence would better become me, than any Answer I could make, so pretended to be too much attentive to the Play, to regard any thing else; this pass'd for a little Time, but the Duke who was in good earnest very much charm'd with me, resumed his Discourse with so much Fervor, that I could not without being very unpolite, and unlike the Character I had assumed, refuse making some return to his Gallantries.

In Conformity therefore to my Part, I put on as chearful an Air as I could, and replied to what he said in a genteel kind of Raillery, as tho' I gave no great Credit to his Asseverations, yet was not displeas'd with them. As I was acting this Piece of Coquetry, I happened to turn my Head, and saw a Man leaning over the side of the Box as diligently observing me: My Eyes met his directly, and I saw it was my Lover the young Marquis *De L——V——*; so great was my Surprize that instant, that nothing is more to be wondered at than that I did not scream out——perhaps he fear'd some such Effect of his sudden Appearance, and immediately turned away; but tho' I restrained myself from doing any thing which might have occasioned a Disturbance, yet I could not refrain from changing Colour, and indeed grew extremely ill——methought a Bolt of Ice shot through my Heart, too true a Presage, alas! of the Vexations this fatal Interview occasion'd——I grew extremely sick, and was obliged to lean my Head upon my Hand: The Duke *De——* presently perceived the Alteration in me, and shew'd a great deal of Concern——I told him I was unable to sit, as indeed I was, and that if I were not carried into the fresh Air I should certainly swoon, at which he seem'd in some Perplexity; it was not customary

tomary for any Person, to go out while the King staid, yet the Respect he had for me made him resolve to wave that Ceremony, and he whisper'd the *Exempt* who open'd the Door, and his Grace led me to a Chair, begging my Pardon that he could not attend me Home, because as he said, the same Excuse which might be well received on my Account, could not be made for him ; but that the Moment his Majesty left the House, he would fly to enquire after my Health.

I was very glad of the Necessity he was under of staying behind me, and long'd to be at home, that I might indulge the many Reflections that this Adventure occasioned.

Indeed nothing could be more alarming than my present Situation, I knew myself innocent, but Appearances were against me, even more and stronger than when the Marquis surprized his Cousin at my Feet——he now instead of being shut up in my Apartment, as he might justly have expected in his Absence, sees me at the Play, in Company with a young Nobleman, who had the Character of the most amorous Man at Court; he hears him addressing me in the softest Terms, and perceives me listening to him, with the Indolence of a Person whose Heart was unengaged, and at Liberty to receive any Offers made to her——He sees that the Moment I discover him I am out of Countenance, ashamed of my Behaviour, am obliged to quit the Place with all the Marks of conscious Guilt upon me——what could he think of me, but that I was false, a Coquet, ungrateful to his Love, and therefore unworthy of it——my tender Heart was ready to burst at the Idea, that he had Cause to remain one Moment in this Opinion of me. As soon as I got into my Chamber, I therefore took Pen and Paper, and wrote a Letter to him, in which I gave him a faithful Account of all that happen'd since I saw him, expatiating pretty largely on the Accident that carried me to his Father's, and the Necessity I was under of complying with his Request, of going to the Play ; and then acquainted him with all my Apprehensions from the old Marquis, as well as those I might justly have from the Duke De—,

who no sooner had conceiv'd a Passion for me, than took the Liberty to declare it, and entreated he would think of some means of removing me from *Versailles*, where I already was taken but too much Notice of.

I felt myself something easier having wrote this Letter, in which I so freely and sincerely laid open all that had pass'd in my Mind ; but then remembring that the Duke had told me he would make me a Visit after the Play, I rang the Bell for my Aunt *Barbara*, and charged her on her Peril to admit no Person whatever that Night, but say that I was gone to Bed.

Depending that I might send my Letter by *Dubois* next Morning, who I doubted not but would be with me early, I sat down to Supper, with a better Appetite than I had done at Dinner, and after the Cloath was taken away, was even easy enough to take a little Book of Novels out of my Closet, and began to read one of those whose Titles promised the most Amusement ; but I had scarce got through two Pages, before my poor silly Aunt, came to tell me that a Nobleman desired to speak with me, on which I flew into a greater Passion than I remember ever to have been sensible of before in my whole Life, in so much that I push'd her out of the Room, without so much as asking any Description of the Person, or hearing what farther she had to say, and then bolted my Door, resolved that no one, even she herself, should see me that Night

—————How thoughtless was I at this Juncture—————
how weak—————might I not have expected my dear Marquis, surprized at what he saw, might not come to reproach my Conduct, or at least to be inform'd of the Motives had occasioned it? but alas ! my Head being taken up with the Fears of his Father on one Side, and the unwelcome Importunities of the Duke on the other, had no place for what was no less probable than either. It was not long however absent from me, and I called again for *Barbara* in a more mild Manner than that in which I had dismiss'd her, and the Account she gave me of the Dress, Shape, and Stature of the Person who had enquired, left me no Room to doubt, if I had not denied

Accels

Access to him, whom of all the World I had the most Reason to desire the Sight of.

I was troubled indeed at what I had done, but could I have foreseen the cruel Consequences that attended it, I should have set no Bounds to my Despair; but, little imagining any such thing, I consoled myself with the Belief, that my Lover so far from resenting my Behaviour in this Point, as he could not take it meant to himself, would applaud my Reserve in giving Orders to be denied at such late Hours——But how unjust are all Mankind, when Jealousy enflames the Mind; the cruel Thoughts he then entertained of me, even now when all the Tempests are blown over, make me shudder to remember.

I pass'd the Night, however, in much more Tranquility, than I did a long Series of succeeding ones; but rose more early than I was accustomed, in hope of seeing either *Dubois* or his dear Master; I was every Moment in Expectation of them, but it grew towards Noon before any body came to ask for me, at which Time word was brought a Gentleman desired to know if I saw any Company that Day; I asked no Questions but gave immediate Orders for his Admittance, I was so confident it was *Dubois*, that I had my Letter in my Hand ready to deliver to him, and was sadly deceived when I found it was no other than the Duke's Valet, with a Message, from him, to know how I rested after my Indisposition, and if I was enough recovered to permit a Visit from him in the Afternoon, I was so vexed at the Disappointment, that I answered with little Politeness I believe, that I was obliged to be abroad the whole Day: after I had given him his Dispatch, I abandoned myself to a thousand perplexing Thoughts on the Marquis's neglect, and every Minute brought with it some fresh Idea to torment me. I was walking about my Chamber, in a Motion of Body as disorder'd as that of my Mind, when *Barbara* came in, and told me a Gentleman in a travelling Habit wanted to speak with me——tho' I could not conceive who this new Visiter was, I bad her shew him up, resolving to be denyed no more without knowing to whom.

78 *The Virtuous Villager ; or,*

A very graceful Gentleman immediately appear'd, and most agreeably surprized me with telling me his Name was *Melicourt*, and at the same time presented me with a Letter from *Saint Agnes*. In spite of all the Trouble I was in, to hear any Thing from that dear Friend, especially to have the News of her brought by a Person, in whose Favour her Story had so highly prepossess'd me, gave me an infinite Satisfaction—I received him with the Civilities of an Acquaintance, and having made him sit down, told him I hoped he would excuse the Impatience I had to read what his lovely Wife had favoured me with, and while I spoke, hastily broke the Seal, and found it contain'd as follows:

To her, whom I shall ever rank among
the dearest of my Friends, the sincere,
and most beautiful JEANETTA.

I WRITE to you now with a Tranquility of Mind, which I should have despaired of ever enjoying, but through your kind Offices ; and imagine not that my Words exceed the Dictates of my Heart, when I assure you that the remembrance of this Circumstance, will always greatly add to the Felicity I flatter myself with soon enjoying in a Reunion with my dear and most deserving Husband—it is he, charming Jeanetta, who will have the Honour to deliver this to you; and by him you will be informed of all the Steps that have been taken to separate us eternally, and render me the most unfortunate of Women. Heaven, and you have render'd the worst Part of their Endeavours fruitless, and will I hope equally disappoint the rest. An additional Interest to that which is already made, would put an End to all our Fears, and give me the Opportunity I so ardently long for of embracing you, and renewing our tender Friendship : I doubt not therefore, but you will engage the Marquis De L——V——— to join our Friends in pressing my discharge from the Monastery.

Our mutual Friend, the virtuous Lindamine, sends you her best Wishes, and charges me to tell you that you are never

wer forgotten in her Prayers——her Piety must sure be heard, and I doubt not but you will be no less happy in the Completion of all you desire, than I hope soon to be. I leave it to my dear Melicourt to acquaint you with the Particulars and am, with the most perfect Affection, and Tenderneſs, the lovely Jeanetta's

ever faithfull Friend, and obliged Servant

Saint Agnes.

P. S. As I was sealing this up, I heard a strange Up-roar in the Convent, and was presently inform'd that it was occasioned by Madamoiselle De Renneville having made her Escape——I cannot yet learn the Circumstances, but imagine they will not long remain a Secret, and I shall have the Pleasure of diverting you with them by Word of Mouth. Once more, dear Jeanetta, Adieu.

I was transported to find the Affairs of this much loved Friend were so near being concluded, and turning to her Husband, begged he would perform the Promise Saint Agnes had made for him, by informing me in what Manner they had proceeded. Alas, Madam, replied he with a Sigh, that dear Creature would never more have heard of her Melicourt, and I should have been the most guilty and most wretched of Mankind, but for the Papers you were so good to forward——'tis to you——to you alone I owe the Happiness of finding a dear, a most beloved and virtuous Wife, whom till then I thought lost for ever——'tis to you I am indebted for my Innocence,——'tis you I am to thank for not being involved in Crimes, which whenever I had known to be such must have turn'd my Brain——But I leave you to judge the Immenſity of the Obligation you have conferr'd upon me, by faithfully relating what has happened since the cruel Day, when the Artifice and Barbarity of Monsieur De—— found Means to separate me, from all that ever was, or ever can be dear.



A Continuation of the History of MELI-COURT, and the beautiful ST. AGNES.

YOU know, Madam, continued this tender Husband, how I was torn from the Arms of your fair Friend——had my Strength been equal to my Fury, in that dreadful Moment a thousand Lives had been the Victims of it ; all that I could I did, but Numbers overpowered me, and I was compelled to yield to the fatal Necessity of seeing her carried away before my Eyes——me, having secured, they treated with a great deal of Respect, notwithstanding the trouble I had given them in seizing me——I suppose they had their Orders for doing so, but I was wholly regardless of their Civilities, and tho' the Officer who commanded the Party appeared to be a Man of great Humanity, and to share in my sufferings, I vouchsafed not to answer any thing he said to me——my Grief was mute, and preyed the deeper on my Heart as I would not give it vent.

After a Journey of four Days I arrived at V——— where I was conducted to the Town-Goal, and not permitted the Use of Pen or Paper, so that I could acquaint none of my Friends with the Place where I was confined. The Governor came to visit me the next Day, behaved to me with much Civility, seemed affected with my Misfortune, and told me that it was in my own power to procure my Discharge, which alone depended on my complying with one thing required of me. I then desired to know what it was ; to agree, answered he, to the means that will be used for setting aside your Marriage, and to deal ingenuously with you, continued he, you have no other way to regain your Freedom ; I therefore would advise you to it, and flatter myself, that when you shall consider seriously on the Affair, you will believe

believe I persuade you to no more than I would put in practice myself on the same Occasion — I know what it is to love, and the Anxiety you must feel in being for ever separated from the Object of your Affections ; but when you reflect on the unsurmountable Obstacles between you, and the Ruin that must attend your Refusal of what is expected from, Love will give way to Reason.

As I offered not to interrupt him during this Discourse, he imagined it had some Weight with me, and that my Silence after he had given over speaking, was a token of my Approbation, and this Opinion I suppose it was that encouraged him to resume the Theme. Think, said he, of the terrible Effects of being obstinate in a Case where you have so powerful an Adversary as Monsieur *de*——— to deal with——— a long and expensive Suit between your Families, which must be ruinous to yours, as having less powerful Friends, and a smaller Estate——— your own Confinement during all that Time, and at last, when a Decree is past against you, as it doubtless will, deprived of all you wish for as totally as tho' you now resign'd it willingly——— make use therefore of your Prudence, and submit to Necessity.

I could now contain myself no longer, but burst out into Exclamations such as made him see, that my suffering him to proceed so far, was not owing to any adherence to what he said ; and as soon as the first Emotions of my Rage was over, I desired he would never entertain me more with any such Proposals ; for I would chuse to suffer eternal Imprisonment, rather than consent to break my present Bonds by dissolving those I had so joyfully put on.

My Resolution astonished him, and from that Time forward, whenever he came to visit me, as he frequently did, forbore any discourse on that Head, any farther than artfully introducing some Stories of parallel Cases, which he perhaps imagined would have a better Effect than either barefaced Persuasions or Menaces. I understood him perfectly well, tho' I thought it best not to seem to do so, and easily perceived he was a Friend of my dear Wife's inhuman Father, which made me en-

deavour to behave before him in a Manner that should make him think my Confinement was less grievous to me than in reality it was. I never asked him any Questions, even concerning the Prosecution against me, nor how my Father defended the Cause ; so that finding my Reserve, and that there was nothing to be hoped from me, he by Degrees refrained coming to see me, and I was entirely freed from his Importunities.

As easy as I had appeared before the Governor, I was notwithstanding forever contriving means for my Escape ; but, alas, I was too well provided against for any of the Attempts I made to prove successful. How impossible, Madam, would it be for me to describe to you the Torments I endured at finding there was no hope of getting from this detested Prison, and wholly ignorant what was become of my dear *Minetta*, for I then knew not she had assumed the Name of *Saint Agnes*, or how the Affairs of my Family stood ; you can only form an Idea of what Words would but imperfectly represent ; some Months did I languish in this terrible Situation, till at last it came into my Head to make the Turnkey my Friend, so far as to procure me Pen and Paper, and to send a Letter to my Father : I had the more Hope of him as he appeared to have a compassionate Soul——I had often heard him lament the Severity of his Fate in throwing him into an Office for Bread, which obliged to the continual Sight of Misfortunes he was no way able to redress ; and the Confidence he reposed in me, by making these Complaints, gave me room to flatter myself I might gain him to my Party——I therefore began with making him little Presents, telling him I liked his Countenance, was sorry he was not in some Employment to which he had less repugnance, and promised that I would procure one for him if ever I obtained my Liberty ; the Fellow was quite transported at the Kindness I had shewn him, and when I had brought him to a Pitch, as I thought, proper for my purpose, I communicated to him my Request ; but instead of complying, he seemed thunderstruck at the Proposal, and represented the Punishments inflicted on

those who betrayed their Trust in the manner I would have him do, and repeated many shocking Examples of Wretches, who had suffered on that score, in such lively Colours, that I began to fear my Hopes in him had deceived me, so pressed him no farther at that Time. But as this was my last recourse, I resolved not entirely to give over the Pursuit, and talking somewhat of it every Day, till by degrees he seemed less averse, at last, on the Promise of a great Reward, he furnished me with Materials for Writing, and undertook to be himself the Bearer of my Letters, fearing as he said to trust any other Person with a Secret so dangerous to him.

You may easily believe, Madam, continued Monsieur *Melicourt*, how glad I was of having gained this Point, which in effect was gaining all; for I did not doubt when my Father should know where I was, he would have Interest enough to procure my Liberty on proper Bail for my Appearance; and when I was once out of Prison, resolved to be so indefatigable in the Search of my dear *Minetta*, that I could not fail of finding her. I wrote a long Letter to my Father, with one enclosed to my Wife, in Case he should be happy enough to have discovered to what Place they had conveyed her, and having recommended Speed and Diligence to the Turnkey, he set out with my Packet, begging me to be easy till his Return; but that happened much sooner than I expected, in two Hours he came again into my Chamber, which made me conclude some ill Accident had happened, and threw me into fresh Exclamations on the Severity of my Destiny.

He opened his Mouth two or three Times to speak, but the Despair I was in would not suffer me to listen, till at last, Monsieur, bawl'd he out, your Impatience prevents your being told what cannot but be agreeable to you. On that I ceased, and bad him tell me the Occasion of his coming back; he then proceeded to inform me, that in his Way he luckily had met his Brother, whom he had not seen in some Years, coming to visit him, and that on relating to him the Business he was

going on, the other offered to take the Office on himself, which, said he, will save me from all Danger in Case the Affair should ever be discovered, and your Letters go equally as safe ; for added he, I will engage my Life for the Fidelity of my Brother. This Story seemed feasible enough, and I made no Difficulty of believing it.

The delightful Expectation of receiving some agreeable News from my Father, gave some truce to my Disquiets, and I waited with a tollerable share of Patience for the Event ; but eighteen Days being passed over without hearing any thing, the Time now began to be tedious ; and five more elapsing, insupportable——I knew not what Conjecture to form on this Delay, unless it were occasioned by sending the enclosed to my dear *Minetta*, who might probably be conveyed to a great Distance ; but then I reflected again, that the Tendernefs my Father had for me, would not permit him to let me remain so long in suspense ; he would have inform'd me immediately of every thing he could, and not waited for more.

I was one Night in the utmost Impatience, I may say indeed Despair, alone in my Prison, and tho' it was dead of Night, not yet in Bed, when an unusual Noise at that late Hour, made me imagine somewhat extraordinary had happened ; but I continued not long in my Surprise, my Door opened, and the Turnkey came in, with a satisfaction in his Countenance, that seemed the Omen of good News. Here, Monsieur, said he, presenting me a Packet of Letters, I hope these will give some abatement to your Disquiets——My Brother is but this Moment returned, and I tremble lest any Suspicion should arise on my admitting him at this unseasonable Hour——I must feign a Pretence for it——Adieu, my staying in your Chamber may be dangerous ; but I could not forbear coming to bring you these joyful Tidings. With these Words he was going out, but I detained him so long as to make him accept of a small Diamond I had on my Finger in Token of my Gratitude,
with

with which he went away highly contented, tho' I dare say much less so than myself at that Moment.

But, alas! of how short a Duration was this Interval of Comfort, and how long a Series of Misery and Despair succeeded——I opened my Packet in great haste, where the first Letter I found was from my Father, tho' the Character so altered, occasioned by a Hurt it inform'd me he had got in his Hand, that I should not have Thought it his, but by the Tenderness of the Contents; within it I found another, which imagining was from my Wife, I kissed it a thousand Times with eager Transports before I was able in this hurry of Spirits to read either that or my Father's, but when I had a little recovered myself, it will not seem strange to you, Madam, that Passion prevailed above Duty. I chose to see what my dear *Minetta* said to me, it being the first Letter I had ever received from her before I read that of my Father. But, good God! what was it I felt, when I found, instead of the Softness of an endearing, a most affectionate Wife, these shocking Lines:

To Monsieur MELICOURT,

AFTER the Folly we have both been guilty of, I could have wished never to have heard any mention of you; but as you still seem to bear an Affection for me, I could not be so ungrateful as to refuse an Answer to your Letter; I am sincerely sorry for what you have suffered on my Account, but if you continue in your Troubles, it is your own Obstinacy, you are to blame, not me; if my Advice has any Weight with you, they will soon be at an End by your submitting to what is required of you——I am no longer an Obstacle, I thought myself obliged to comply with the Will of my Parents, and now release you from all Engagements between us——I own I had some Difficulty in bringing myself to do this, but am now convinced that our first Duty is Obedience, and that all Promises, all Oaths are invalid, when made without the Consent of those to whom we owe our being,——I flatter myself you have Resolution and good Sense sufficient to enable you to follow my Example; or if not so, at least too much Re-

gard for me not to disturb my present Tranquility by any future Letters or Messages, much less to make any Attempt to see me——there being no Person on Earth, whom, for many Reasons, I would so much wish to avoid.

The Agonies this cruel Letter threw me in, would certainly have made me lay violent Hands on my own Life, had not some Sparks of Pride that Moment rose to my Assistance, and made me think it beneath the Dignity of my Reason to fall for so perfidious, so ungrateful a Creature——What, cried I, throwing the Letter away with the utmost Disdain, did Love and Constancy like mine deserve so base a Return!——I'll follow your Advice, forgetful, thankless, unfaithful Woman! I'll never think on thee but with Scorn and Detestation——in this manner did I rail for at least two Hours without being able to examine what Account my Father had given me of so unlooked for a Change. At last I gained Composure of Mind sufficient to read his Letter, and found he began with exhorting me to be patient, and having confess'd to me in a very free manner, that his Interest being far inferior to that of the Father of my unworthy Wife, he had been forced to drop the Suit; but had an Assurance of my being set at Liberty the Moment I yielded to the Dissolution of my Marriage, that being, he said, the sole Impediment to hinder her, I once thought mine, from giving her Hand to a Person her Parents had made choice of. He added, that, she had refused their Importunities but a few Days, and to obtain her Pardon, had consented to marry the Moment my Release from her former Vows should arrive, till which he said I must remain in Prison, it not being in his Power to free me.——

He enforced the Arguments he made use of, to bring me to a Resolution so conformable to Reason, and what I owed myself, with the most strenuous Commands that Words could form; and after many Pauses and Struggles with a Passion, which was far from being extinguish'd by this ill Treatment; I at last determin'd not to languish out my Life in a miserable Goal, for the sake of
one

one who after the most sacred Vows, and all the mutual Endearments of Conjugal Affection, could so easily consent never to see me more, and give herself into the Arms of another.

Two whole Days, however, pass'd over without my being able to put in Practice what I had resolv'd; I still loved the dear Ingrate with the same Passion, as when I thought her true, and happy in my Affection.—— Her Charms were too deeply engraven in my Heart for even her Infidelity to erase; but when I reflected on her Beauty, and the Pleasures I had enjoy'd in her Society, her Falshood, her Levity, her Hypocrisy, render'd her so unworthy that I even hated myself, because I could not hate her as I ought.——Never was such a Chaos as my Brain, such a Medley of perplex'd Ideas, were, indeed, enough to drive to Distraction; yet I at last assumed the Man, exerted my Reason, and in spite of all I felt within appear'd sedate; I sign'd the Renunciation so much desired of me, and gave my solemn Promise, nay, assured them in Terms more strong than they exacted from me, that I would never attempt to see the dangerous *Minetta* more.——O! Madam, pursued *Melicourt*, how heavenly good is your fair Friend to pardon what the Dictates of my jealous Rage then said of her.——I curst her——even from the Bottom of my Soul I curst her Perfidy, though at the same time I secretly adored her Beauty.——My Behaviour, however, making them believe I had now a real Abhorrence of her, forwarded my Liberty, and I was discharged from dismal the Prison, where I had near a Year been confined.

You may suppose, Madam, that as soon as I had the power I went directly Home, where the Surprise of seeing me alive and at liberty, had like to have been fatal to both my Parents; my Mother fell into a Swoon, and my Father, though of a stronger Constitution, was also very near being in the same Condition.——Excess of Joy entirely over-powered their Spirits, and when they had recover'd their Voices, could say nothing for a great while; but——is it possible!——By what

Miracle

Miracle do we see you again.—Is it really our Son, or an Illusion.—And such like Exclamations, which were to me unintelligible, as I had so lately wrote to them the whole Circumstance of my Situation, and had receiv'd an Answer from them, containing the Conditions of my Freedom ; I thought there was somewhat unnatural in the Astonishment they both expressed, and began to fear some Disorder in the Mind had seized them ; but the first Transports of unruly Joy being a little over, and I beginning to mention the Letters, how confounded was I in my Turn, to hear they had never wrote to me, nor knew where I had been secreted from the time I was forced away, to the happy Moment of my Return. On this I shew'd the Letters—I had receiv'd by the Hands of the Turnkey, and my Father assuring me, that sign'd with his Name was a Forgery, I began to hope that from my Wife was the same also ; but, alas, that pleasing Idea lasted not long, both my Parents confirmed the Story of her Falshood, having heard it from all Hands, and, indeed, so industriously had Monsieur *De*—— caused the Report of her intended Marriage to be spread, that it was a thing not doubted of, by any who were any way acquainted either with her or me. From thence it was natural to infer, that the Letter was really wrote by her ; though the other was a Contrivance the more to hasten me to give up my Claim. The Imagination that she was concerned in this Stratagem render'd her more unworthy than ever in my Eyes, and I laboured incessantly not only to forget all that had endear'd her to me, but even to hate her. As this was a Disposition which could alone restore me to my former Peace of Mind, my Mother endeavour'd all in her power to divert me, continual Balls and Entertainments were given at our House to all the neighbouring Gentry ; and as nothing is so effectual to estrange the Heart from an Object it has been accustomed to, as a Variety of new ones, she took care to have always some agreeable young Lady or other with us. Among this Number there was one, no less admired for her Beauty, than for her Wit and good Humour,

her

her Name is *Mademoiselle De Marcy*, and her Family and Fortune, perfectly conformable to our own.

I must confess there was something in this young Lady which extremely pleased me, I was never so happy as when in her Company, and whenever I quitted it felt a Regret, mix'd with an Impatience to see her again: yet could not all this be called Love; it was rather Friendship founded on the Knowledge of her good Qualities, an Esteem, an Admiration of the Mind, in which the Body had no share, nor did I ever once think of the difference of Sexes in all the Conversations I had with her.

My Behaviour, however, made every one give me to her for a Lover, my Parents were infinitely pleased to find me as they believ'd, engaged in a Passion so agreeable as to Circumstances, and thinking they acted extremely prudently, propos'd a Match between us to the Friends of the young Lady, who readily accepted it, after having found she had no Aversion to it; and every thing was in a manner concluded on, without my knowing any such thing was in Agitation.

I was all the time endeavouring to forget my dear *Minetta*, but in vain——sleeping and waking her Image was ever before my Eyes, and I was but just awaked from a Dream of her, which gave me some Disquiet, when my Mother came into my Chamber with a more than ordinary Satisfaction in her Countenance.

Now, my dear Son, said she, I flatter myself the Remainder of your Days will atone for the Anxieties of the past; *Mademoiselle De Marcy* thinks you not unworthy of her, her Kindred agree to your Happiness, and all things are so disposed, that the Contract between you may be sign'd this very Evening. The Surprise I was in at so unexpected a Salutation, and the little Satisfaction I express'd, very much alarm'd this tender Parent, what, cry'd she, are you not in love with *Mademoiselle De Marcy*? Has our Endeavours to make you happy proved the Reverse? Do you not think her deserving of you? Yes, Madam, reply'd I, that Lady's Merits may justly entitle her to a more exalted Fortune than
she

she could share with me ;——but, alas, I never entertain'd one Thought that way, I am incapable of making her happy, and in spite of all her Charms, I should languish even in her Arms for the dear absent, though ungrateful Object of my first Vows.

My Mother, though by Nature one of the most sweet temper'd of her Sex, could not hear me speak these Words without flying into an Extremity of Rage ; my Father when he was told of my Refusal was not less provoked ; all our Kindred highly blamed me, my Acquaintance wonder'd, and, in fine, all the World blamed my Stupidity as they term'd it, and Meanness of Spirit to retain enough of my former Affection, for one who had proved herself so unworthy of it, as to make me slight a young Lady every way qualified to make me happy, and who had preferr'd me to a great Number who sigh'd in vain for her.

Indeed, Madam, though I would not adhere to the Remonstrances made me on this Head, I secretly allow'd the Justice of them, and extremely condemn'd myself for having given Occasion for them : When once we are brought to believe that Reason demands our Assent to any particular Action, though Inclination may oppose, a Person with any share of Resolution may overcome it, and prevail with himself to do as seems most just. This join'd with the Importunities of my Friends, and, indeed, the Menaces of my Father, who told me, I had already brought him to trouble enough, and that he would risque no more, but determin'd to disown me as a Son if I did not comply, at last engaged me to consent.

The Day before that prefix'd for my Marriage with Mademoiselle *De Marcy*, the Letters you were so good to forward came to Hand, which gave a most fortunate Reverse to this Affair.——My Parents were too just, and, indeed, too much attached to my dear Wife now proved innocent, not to rejoice at the timely Discovery ; the Family of Mademoiselle *De Marcy* had no Occasion for Resentment : And the young Lady herself had the Generosity to congratulate me on the seasonable Discovery,

very, which had it arriv'd but two Days later must have involv'd us all in Misery. Every Body join'd with me in detesting the Cruelty of Monsieur and Madam De—— in barbarously attempting to sacrifice their Daughter to a vile Interest: We consulted the Laws a second time in favour of this charming Woman, and my Father having well weigh'd what he was to do, entered the Protestation *Minetta* had made against her Vows, and revived the Suit which had so long lain dormant against Monsieur De——, in order to oblige him to acknowledge her as his Child. It had only been through the Power of a favourite Minister, that he had got the better of my Father before; but that Person was now in Disgrace, and we hoped, that when the Cause come to be try'd before impartial Judges, he must either own himself her Father, or suffer the Penalty of the Law, of assuming a right over her, and forcing her into a Convent, while he confined me in unwarrantable Bonds.

Our Opinion did not deceive us, Monsieur was now obliged to appear himself before the Court of Judicature, and was cast.——The Proofs were as clear as the Day: My dear *Minetta* is decreed Co-heiress with her Sister, and her Father forbid seeing her till further Permission: The whole verbal Process is sent to *Rome*, and there is no doubt but a Dispensation will soon arrive, and we shall be re-united with all the Forms necessary for the Occasion.

As in all Probability the *Nuncio* will have Orders to decide it, the Marquis De L——V——'s Interest to that Prelate, to whom we have not the Honour to be known, would be of great Service toward hastening the Affair to a Conclusion; and this Favour, Madam, the long-suffering *Minetta* begs you will endeavour to procure for her.

Thus did Monsieur *Melicourt* finish his Story, and having thanked him for the Trouble he had given himself in acquainting me with these Particulars, told him I rejoiced to have it in my power to do any thing that might hasten his

his Felicity ; that I doubted not of the Marquis's Readiness to comply with my Friends, as well out of his love of Virtue, as his Attachment to me ; that I had now wrote to him, and would break open my Letter on purpose to insert a Postscript on the Business he mentioned. I had no sooner said this but I broke the Seal, and recommended my dear Friend's Business in Terms the most strenuous, my Tenderness for her could suggest.

After this, we enter'd into a Conversation on the many Difficulties which are frequently the Attendants on Love, though of the most perfect and honourable kind ; no-body had more Experience than myself of this, and therefore could speak feelingly upon it ; indeed, I had at this time a sufficient share of Anxiety, to render me more than ordinarily eloquent on the Occasion. *Dubois*, whom I so impatiently expected many Hours before, was not yet come, and I could not imagine now to account for this Neglect ; it was now past Noon, and my Uneasiness grew so visible, that Monsieur *Melicourt* could not but take Notice of it. On his asking me the Cause, I made no Scruple of revealing it, with the Danger I was in from the old Marquis, if his Son were not acquainted with the Accidents that had happen'd since I saw him. The Husband of *Saint Agnes* seemed concerned I had not given him a Commission to deliver it, telling me it was a Thing of too much Consequence for me to have delayed, through the Complaisance of listening to his Story, and begg'd I would that instant permit him to go with it, and bring me an Answer back. This Offer was too obliging to be refused, I gave him his Instructions and he departed.

As it was so small a Distance, I expected him soon again, but two, three, and four o'Clock passed over, yet he was not return'd : This Delay gave me some alarm ——— a thousand strange Ideas came into my Head, concerning the Occasion of it ; and, to add to my Terrors, Madam *De Genneval* enter'd my Chamber, and told me the Marquis *De L———V———* was come to visit me ——— he would not be delayed, said she, 'till I could apprise you of the Honour, but told me he was certain
you

you had too much Good-Nature not to dispence with Ceremony. As she spoke he followed her in, and took from me, by his Presence, the Opportunity of replying to what she said, as otherwise I should have done, and perhaps not in a manner very obliging to her, in the Humour I then was. How difficult is it, when the Heart is oppress'd with Cares to assume a Serenity of Countenance? yet it is a Piece of Dissimulation, in some measure necessary for People that live in the World; but I was too little practis'd in this Art, to elude the Penetration of a Man such as the Marquis: He presently perceived the Constraint I put upon myself, and ask'd if he was come at an improper Time. No, my Lord, answered I a little faulting in my Speech, and if I appear not altogether so satisfied with this Honour, as I ought to be, I beg your Lordship to impute it to a little Disorder, occasioned by want of Sleep last Night. This Excuse, which was all I could think on at that Time, gave him an Opportunity of saying many gay and gallant things, on the Occasion of my Watchfulness——among other Things he told me, that nothing but Love could have the Power of breaking the rest of a Lady of my Years and Circumstances, and while he spoke this, looked at me with Eyes, which methought said JEANETTA, *you in vain endeavour to hide yourself——I know you——and can read your inmost Soul.* Tho' this was only my own Imagination, yet it frighted me little less than the reality would have done.

'Tis a received Maxim, that the most silly Girl has Wit enough to manage a Love Intrigue, but I was an Exception to this Rule; as I was every Moment expecting *Melicourt*, either with a Letter, or some Message of very great Importance, nay knew not but even the young Marquis might have come with him, I ought in Prudence to have made some Pretence to step out of the Room, and given orders to *Barbara*, to let whoever came to visit me know who was above; but tho' I thought of this, I had not Courage to put it in Execution, I fear'd the least Action would make me suspected more than I already was, and so run a Hazard of being much more so, of being
fully

fully discovered, as I must have been, if my Lover; or even *Dubois* had come at that juncture.

Whenever the old Marquis look'd upon me, I had not the Power to meet his Eyes, but cast mine down with a Confusion that sometimes made him smile, and willing I suppose to increase it, he drew his Chair nearer me, and began to bestow the most lavish Encomiums on my Beauty: the Name of Father to the Man I loved, gave him such an Ascendant over me, that tho' I could not have listened to several of his Expressions, from any other without Contradiction, Fear and Regard would not suffer me to give him any Interruption. But when Madam *De Genneval*, to make her Court to him I suppose, as well as to shew her Wit and Sprightliness, went to pluck back my Handkerchief, to shew as she said the Whiteness of my Neck, I drew it close again, and gave her so severe a Look, as shew'd them both I was not of a Humour to bear such Freedoms, nor would be jested with too far. The Air I put on, on this Occasion, made the Marquis assume a different Turn of Behaviour, and I could perceive that from that Moment he ever after treated me with more Respect, and Madam *De Genneval* with less. Which I think is a plain Demonstration, how much 'tis in our Sex's Power, to give an Awe, even to those whose Fortune and Character makes them apt to imagine every Thing becomes them.

The old Nobleman, however, left not off my Praises, but then a certain Seriousness accompanied them, which, tho' I could not avoid feeling some Confusion at the extravagant Compliments on my Beauty, took of all Motives for Resentment. He was still on that Topic, when *Melicourt* thinking I was alone, and impatient for his return, came hastily into the Room, with a Letter in his Hand, I turn'd pale as Death at the sight of him, and had scarce Power to rise from my Seat to receive him. The Marquis could not but observe this change in my Countenance, as he had his Eyes never off me, but taking no Notice of it to me, got up and return'd the Civilities paid him by the Husband of *Saint Agnes*,
who

who judging him by many distinguishing Marks to be a Person of Quality, made his Reverence in the most profound Manner.

When we had all replaced ourselves, the Marquis and *Melicourt* entered into a Conversation, which tho' indifferent, gave this young Gentleman opportunity of shewing he wanted neither Wit nor Education; and by Degrees, as People are apt to speak of what they have most at Heart, artfully enough introduced his own and Mistress's Story, with a View no doubt of interesting the Marquis in his Favour; who seeming desirous of doing every Thing to oblige me, asked me if I should find any Satisfaction to see the Affairs of that beautiful Nun accommodated. I was too zealous for my Friend, not to assure his Lordship there were very few Things I so earnestly wished. Well then, Madam, answered he, I give you my Word and Honour, that I will employ all the Credit I have with the *Nuncio*, which I flatter myself is of some Weight, to engage him to a speedy determination in her Favour. Be pleased, added he, turning to *Melicourt* to send me an exact Memorial of the Proceedings, and I will not only be your Advocate myself, but oblige my Friends to join with me in doing you all the good Offices in our Power.

I thanked the Marquis for this Condescension, with a Warmth which manifested how zealously I espoused the Cause of my Friend; and this Proof of my Sincerity drew on me fresh Compliments; but not all the fine Things said of me by Persons, who so well knew how to judge, could make me easy; my Love had much the Preheminence over my Vanity great as it was, and I impatiently longed to be alone with *Melicourt*, that I might know what my dear Marquis said to my Letter. But my suspense was not yet to cease, and to add to my Perplexities, a new Adventure happened which was very near betraying at once all I had so carefully concealed.

My poor unthinking Aunt, who by accident was in the next Room, when some Body knocked very loud at the Street-Door, looked out of the Window to see who it was, and then came running into the Chamber where we were,

were, crying, Madam, Madam, here is the fine young Gentleman that dined with you one Day, come to visit you. The Blood immediately forsook my Heart, and flew into my Face, at these Words, I knew it must be either my Lover, or *Saint Fal* she meant ; and which ever it were, if seen by the old Marquis, must betray my Secret——in this Confusion, I got up and ran out of the Room without being able to make any Excuse to the Company——I heard the Door open, and knew the Person was let in——I flew to the Stairs, and met *Saint Fal* half way——fly, cried I, out of Breath with the haste I had made, the old Marquis is here——unlucky Accident, returned he, I have things to tell you of the utmost Importance——endeavour to get rid of my Uncle as soon as you can, and I will return when I think he is gone——what News of the Marquis, said I ? Mad, answered he, but this is not a Time nor Place to tell you——in speaking these Words he made towards the Street-Door, and at that Instant some Body knocked——Perhaps he is here, cried I, more dead than alive at the manner in which he had spoke ; but if it be, let him instantly depart. You need be under no such Apprehensions, replied the Count, it cannot be him, I wish to Heaven it were——we would find some way to conceal him from his Father. What is it you mean ? My Lord, resumed I trembling, what has happened ? *Saint Fal* was going to make some Answer but the knocking redoubled, and I bethought me of making him run into the Kitchen, till the Person should be let in ; and returned to the Company, having ordered *Barbara* to see who it was that knocked——the Consternation I was in at the few Words the Count had said to me on his Cousin's Account, joined to the Fears of being discovered, rendered me so wild and disordered that I could scarce make any Apology for having left my Visitors so abruptly.

The Marquis, who suffered not the least Look or Motion of mine to escape his Notice, asked me in a low Voice, if any thing had happened to me in which he could be of no Service, assuring me, at the same Time,
that

that I might command any thing in his power. I was about to reply, tho' I believe it would have been with Distraction enough, when I was prevented by the entrance of the Duke *de*——— I was glad of this Interruption in one Sense, and vex'd at it in another: being unprepared to make a suitable Return to what the Father of my Lover had offered, this Excuse for my Silence was opportune; but then any addition to the Company I had before, threatening to delay my talking with *Melicourt*, and also to prevent my speaking a second Time to *Saint Fal*, who had promised me to come again, was the most unfortunate Incident that could be.

When every Body had paid those Civilities to the Duke, which his Quality demanded, the Conversation was renewed with a great deal of good Sense and Spirit—every Body but myself seemed to exert their Wit and Eloquence; but I believe my Reader will easily imagine the Situation of my Mind at that Time would not permit me to make use of my little Talents that way.

They were rallying the Marquis on the Admiration he had some time before testified for the Lady of a certain Count, who came to sollicite an Affair at Court, when we heard *Barbara* give a great Scream, and presently after saw that poor Creature come running in a most terrible Fright, crying, 'Thieves! Thieves! —— where, cried I, all the Company joined with me in the demand, and the three Gentlemen immediately had their Hands on their Swords. In the Kitchen, answered she, I was going in and found the Door held fast against me, and on attempting to push it open, out rushed a Man, the Passage was dark, and I could not distinguish what sort of Person he was, but I am afraid he has left some of his Companions, for never a Rogue of 'em all would have the Impudence to come alone to rob a House at Noon Day. I doubted not but it was *Saint Fal* she meant, and was glad to find he had got off undiscovered; but was obliged to feign myself under Apprehensions, and *Barbara* begging that the Kitchen might be searched, saying that till it were, she durst not venture down Stairs, every body ran down in compliance with her

Fears——not the least Corner escaped their Scrutiny, but no Man was to be found ; in looking earnestly about, however the Duke took up a Glove fring'd with Gold, which *Saint Fal* in his hurry had let fall ; upon my Honour, cried the Marquis, with a Smile, this Thief is certainly a Man of Fashion, I imagine he came with an intent to steal something more valuable than any thing in the Kitchen——I wish he had not some Designs on *Barbara*. Ah ! cried the Duke, who knows but she might have other Reasons than those she pretended for crying out. The Tone in which these Words were spoke, and the Laughter that ensued, made my good Aunt, who was but a droll Figure at the best, look exceeding silly ; and the grave Answers she made, and the Asseverations that she knew him not, and that he could be no other than a common Thief, heighten'd the Mirth, and I believe it would have continued a much longer Time, had not the Hour for the Marquis's Attendance at Court approach'd, and he was oblig'd to take leave, tho' as he said with Regret. The Duke I perceived had an Intention to stay behind him, but as I had not the same Awe of him as I had of the other, I had Resolution enough to let his Grace know, I was obliged to write some Dispatches about Affairs of Moment to me, for which that Gentleman, pointing to *Melicourt*, waited, and had done so a considerable Time, his Grace was too polite to oppose my Desires, and took his leave at the same Time the Marquis did ; Madam *de Genneval* also retired, and I was at last at Liberty to entertain *Melicourt* on a Subject I was so impatient to hear : But, good Heaven ! how little did I expect or deserve what I was going to receive, I tremble to this Day, and my Blood runs cold through all my Veins, when I reflect on the dreadful Tryal to which my Fortitude was put.

After having asked Monsieur *Melicourt* if he had seen the Marquis, and what was the Effect of his Embassy, he gave me a Letter ; there, Madam, said he, is an Answer to what you wrote, I fear it will not be very pleasing to you, and am extremely grieved to be so unfortunate

fortunate in the first Business I have the honour to be employed on by you.

I rather snatch'd than took the Paper he presented to me, in the Agony his Words involved me, and hastily opening it, found in it these distracting, these soul-rending Lines.

To Madamoiselle JEANETTA.

The very Address, so different from the Stile of a fond Lover to the Object of his Affections, was near making me faint away, but I summon'd all my Resolution to my Assistance, and with much ado, read on as follows :

I Am surpriz'd, Madam, that a Lady so much admired, and so much taken up with the Gallantries of the Age, should find Leisure to make any excuses for her Behaviour to a Person who has it not in his Power to make those publick Acknowledgments of his Passion, which I find are so agreeable to her——Mistake me not, Madam, I pretend not to complain of the Conduct you have been pleas'd to observe, since your Arrival at Versailles——I have too much Regard for your Happiness to disapprove of those Civilities, which seem due to the Quality and Merit of the Duke De——if he should happen to have the same Intentions for you as I had. I shall never upbraid you with having put the first Hand towards raising your Fortune——the delicacy of my Sentiments will prevent me from ever giving you Disquiet——your Inclinations shall not be disputed by me, and as you receive his Grace's Visits, permit him to attend you to the Play, listen to the soft Things he entertains you with, it would be unpardonable in me to offer any Interruption to an Intercourse so satisfactory to you.——You are certainly independant, and I have no right to demand any Account of your Actions——I wish you more Happiness than I can now ever hope to enjoy myself, and shall take care never to disturb your new Engagements by Visits no less unprofitable to myself, than disagreeable to you——Farewell, therefore——Forever.

L—————V—————

P. S. *I beg you will give yourself no trouble to answer this, for be assured nothing of yours will evermore come to my Hand.*

Let any Woman who has ever known what 'tis to love sincerely the most perfect Object in the World now put herself in my Place, for none but such a one can judge of what I felt——my Despair was so great, my Grief so poignant, that I could neither vent it in Tears nor in Complaining——motionless as a Statue did I stand some time——*Melicourt* endeavoured, to console me as I afterward was told ; but I heard not any thing he said——all my Senses were overwhelm'd, inasmuch that I saw not the Count *de Saint Fal*, who entered while I was in this State of Insensibility. The fatal Letter had dropt from my Hand, and lay near me on the Floor, and on his casting his Eyes on that and on me, he no longer was at a loss for the meaning of the Condition he found me in. His tender Soul was touched with the utmost Compassion for my Distress, and taking me by the Hand, dear Madam, cried he, mitigate your Sorrows, and pardon the Author of them ; all his Fault is occasioned by an Excess of Passion——No, no, my Lord, replied I, just then recovering the use of Speech, he loves me not——he never loved me as he ought ; for if he had, he could not have treated me in this cruel Manner——if there is any Sincerity in Man, cried I wildly ; if all your Professions of Friendship, be not as false, as wavering, as his are of Love, assist me to fly from this detested Place——never more will I be seen of the World, never more endure the Sight of barbarous unfaithful Man !——Ah ! My dear *Saint Agnes*, why did I not follow the prudent *Lindamine*, and pass my Days with her in the peaceful Cloyster ! the Society of two such Friends would have enabled me to bear up against the Treachery of a designing Lover, who wanted but a Pretence to abandon me, and no doubt triumphs in that which my Necessity, not Inclination enforced me to give him.——But, continued I, what need have I of any help to go where only Peace of
Mind

Mind is to be found——I'll discover instantly who I am, to the Father of my ungrateful Lover; his Hate will do all I could hope for from Affection——he will send me where I no more shall hear the Name of him who has undone my Quiet.

Thus did I exclaim till I had no longer Breath, without suffering either *Melicourt* or the Count to speak one Word; but the former having taken his leave, being obliged to go where his own Affairs required his Presence, the other made known the Generosity of his Soul, in a manner few Men, if any beside himself, could put in Practice; instead of taking any Advantage of my Rage against the Marquis, for the Interest of his own Passion, he employed all his Wit and Eloquence in favour of his Rival: he told me, that disobliging as this proof was of his Love, there could not be a greater than the Jealousy he exprest.——He then endeavoured to lay before me what Appearances there were, that I merited some little Resentment, and begg'd I would not give way to a Despair, which he was certain would be more afflicting to his Cousin, than any thing I was capable of doing.

I suffered him to proceed without any interruption; but the Fury with which I was at first possess'd subsiding by degrees, an adequate share of Grief took its Place, and bursting into a Flood of Tears, Ah, my Lord! cried I, I am but too sensible of the Truth of what you say——your amiable Cousin did certainly once love me——that he does so no more is owing to myself——my Imprudence and Ill-management has forfeited the Pretensions I had to his Heart——I have been so unhappy as to displease him, perhaps too, to give him some Uneasiness——O, tell him, my Lord, that I confess the Faults I have been guilty of, tho' led into them only by an Excess of Tenderness for him——tell him, that I will punish myself for them by forsaking the World, which has nothing in it for me without his Love.

But I will not trouble the Reader with all the incoherent things I uttered in this terrible Situation; it shall suffice to say, that all Monsieur *Saint Fal* could do, was ineffectual to bring me to any tolerable Composure of

Mind, and he was obliged to leave me, it growing late, with an infinite Concern.

The next Day he came again, but found me in the same Distraction, *Melicourt* also employed all his leisure Hours, in endeavouring to assuage my Grievs ; but every Attempt to that Purpose was in vain. Those two were the only Persons I would see, and tho' the old Marquis most earnestly begg'd to speak with me, I made *Barbara* put him off sometimes on one Pretence, and sometimes on another. As for the Duke *de*——he had been five times at my Lodging without being admitted, in one of which, since he could not see me, he left for me a handsome Sum of Money, which the Bounty of the King had bestowed on me, through his Hands, in consideration of the Services my supposed Husband had been said to have done. But this Favour caused me afterwards much Trouble, as will be seen hereafter in the Course of these Memoirs. Common Gratitude obliged me to suffer his Grace to be admitted once after this, I thanked him for the Recommendations he had given me to the King, but received him in so cool a Manner, that it was easy for him to perceive his Visits were not at all agreeable, and testified a Concern at it, which convinced me, he was entirely serious when he told me he loved me.

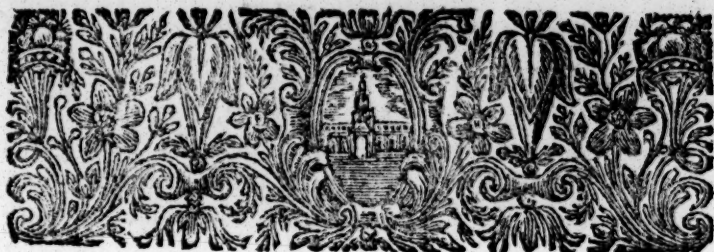
At length I was also obliged to see the old Marquis, but the Constraint I put on myself to assume a Chearfulness which was far distant to my Heart, was such a Pain that I could scarce support it, and besides, counterfeited so ill the Part I endeavoured to act, that a Person of infinitely less Penetration than his I had to deal with, might have perceived it. The Views he had at that time in his Head, however, made him take not the least Notice of any Alteration in me, and he always behaved to me with the greatest Good-humour and Complaisance.

For eight Days never Creature suffered more than I did, during all which time I heard nothing of my Lover, —— from the second Day after I had received that cruel Letter neither the Count nor *Melicourt* seemed willing to mention his Name, and tho' I seldom spoke of any else, I could observe that they evaded all the Questions

Question I asked, by putting others to me foreign to the Purpose; this strangely perplex'd me, and growing quite impatient to be kept thus in the dark, in a thing which so nearly concern'd me, I at last got out of them, that the Marquis had left *Versailles*, and was gone to join his Regiment in *Germany* where the War was broke out. What an Addition was this to what I felt before!—— Can Words express what 'twas I suffered——No, 'twas unutterable——inconceivable——the very Remembrance, even now blest as I am in the utmost of my Wishes, strikes me with Horror——I am able to proceed no farther; but those who take Interest enough in my Story to wish for the Event must have Patience till I recover myself, and continue a generous Pity for me——they shall soon see, that the Happiness I now enjoy has been brought about by all the Trials of Fortitude and Patience that Woman could sustain.

The End of the EIGHTH PART.





THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR,
VIRGIN'S VICTORY.

PART. IX.



AFTER this last mentioned dreadful Shock, I shut myself up from all the World, not excepting the Count *De Saint Fal* or the obliging Husband of my dear *Saint Agnes*: Nothing but the best Constitution that ever was, could have enabled me to sustain the Weight of Anguish, which I then labour'd under—I endeavour'd to bring myself to some Resolution where to go; for *Versailles* and all the Gaieties of it, were now detestable to me: I had very often thoughts of discovering myself to my Aunt *Barbara*, and return with her to the Village. As all the Misfortunes I had undergone, and even the Errors I had been guilty of, arose from the violent Affection I had for the Marquis, not excepting even that for which I was forsaken, it seem'd as if Providence did not
approve

approve my Tendernefs, and I ought in Obedience to the divine Will, to lay this voluntary Punifhment on myfelf, to return to my native Meanness, and fubmit to all the additional Ills, which the Infults, I muft expect to receive for my Behaviour, fince I left it, muft inflict upon me.

——I reflected on the Penance *Lindamine* laid on herfelf, in being obliged to relate her unhappy Story wherever ſhe came, and thought my Vanity deferved no lefs a Humiliation; but alas! how little do we know ourfelves, that very Vanity which I wifh'd to mortify, had ftill too much dominion over me, to permit me to continue long in this Refolution; after a long Struggle, therefore, a Monaſtry was the only Refuge I could content to take.

I then wrote to *Saint Fal*, defiring he would come to me immediately, and as ſoon as I ſaw him, conjured him to comply with what I defired: Can you doubt if I will do ſo, answered he? no, my Lord, ſaid I, your Honour and Sincerity are too well known to me, and I ſhall not hesitate to entreat you will crown the Work you have begun, 'tis all I ſhall ever aſk of you. As I ſpoke this, the Tears trickled down my Cheeks, and riſing Sighs obſtructed the Paſſage of my Words: Permit me, cried the Count, to ſpare you the Trouble of mentioning your Commands——I know what 'tis you expect from me——you would have me overtake the Marquis, convince him of the Injuſtice of his Suſpicions, and bring him to your Feet a Penitent: I will this inſtant go about it, and if Deſpair has not rendered him deaf to Reaſon, you ſhall be ſatisfied. No, my Lord, replied I, my paſt Conduct, as to that Nobleman, has made you put a wrong Conſtruction on the preſent——ſo far from purſuing him with my unhappy Love, I wiſh not to ſee him more——His Eyes are now opened——a tranſient Paſſion in my Favour had blinded him, but he now ſees the vaſt Diſparity between us, is aſhamed of the Weakneſs he has been guilty of, and atones for it by abandoning me——I blame him not for remembering the Dignity of his Birth, I only think, he might have quitted me without cruelly accuſing me;——but I will talk

no farther on that Subject——the happy Moments; in which I indulged too flattering Ideas, must now be buried in eternal Oblivion——the Follies into which a headstrong Passion hurried me, be punished,——my Aim now, my only Aim, is to pass my whole Life in a Convent, and there in the lowest Station, humble the Pride your Cousin's Addresses kindled in me——I flatter myself, that Heaven in Pity of my Youth and Innocence will enable me in Time to get the better of a Tenderness, which not all his Severities has yet extinguished——my constant Prayers shall be to free my Heart from an Image too deeply engraven on it, and my Tears incessantly poured at the Feet of the holy Altar, will perhaps prevail, and restore to me that Peace which at present is a Stranger.

I uttered this in Accents so moving, and accompanied what I said with a Flood of Tears, that *Saint Fal* could not forbear sympathizing with me, yet was far from agreeing to my desire of excluding myself from the World for ever : he represented to me the Danger I should incur of being miserable, where I expected Ease ; by suffering the worst of Torments, that of a too late and fruitless Remorse : Despair, he told me, would infallibly be the Consequence of such rash Vows, which would no sooner be made, than I should wish to break. He insinuated artfully, that I was not of a Disposition for a Cloyster, and that tho' I was at present out of Humour with the World, Time, or perhaps said he, the Repentance of my Cousin, might work a Change in my Sentiments.

Here I interrupted him, and with an Air which was not without some Mixture of Disdain in it, no, Count, said I, tho' I love the Marquis with the utmost Tenderness, and I fear in spite of my Efforts shall always do so, yet if he should return to his first Vows, on no Consideration whatever will I ever be prevailed upon to see a Man more, who has once abandoned me——this is my fix'd Resolution, and the whole World shall never shake it.

Monsieur de Saint Fal seemed to think very seriously on what I had said for sometime without speaking, and when

when he did, argued but faintly against it : He owned the Marquis deserved I should resent his hasty Determination ——— that I ought not to have been condemned without hearing at least what I had to say in my Defence ; but still insisted on the Manner of my doing it. And after repeating the same Arguments he had before made use of, against my being a Nun, charming *Jeanetta*, said he, your Heart is made for Love ——— you have too lively an Imagination to live in a state of Indifference ——— you will always love, and what is in Nature cannot be eradicated ——— would to Heaven that whenever the Object changes, it may be in Favour of one, who would make it the Business of his Life to merit you, and who could never be capable of suspecting you. He was going on, perhaps to speak even more plain, when *Barbara* imagining, because I had sent for *Saint Fal*, I would see Company as usual, brought the Duke *De* ——— into the Room. I was a little vex'd, being not in a Humour to speak to any, but those who knew the Cause, however I received him with the Civility his Rank, and my late Obligations to him demanded. But I could not so far banish the Cloud from my Brow, as to hinder him from perceiving it, and after we were seated, as I was told Madam, said he, you admitted few Visits for some Days past, I would have chose rather to deprive myself of what I look on as my greatest Happiness, then have broke in on your Privacies, had not an odd Affair happened which I thought proper to make you acquainted with ——— perhaps, continued he, your Ladyship knows of it already, and that has occasioned the Uneasiness I see you under, but, Madam, I would not have you disquiet yourself too far, depend upon it, you have Friends who will give you convincing Proofs of their Respect for you.

I was prodigiously surprized at this Discourse, as I could not imagine what new Accident had happened, in which I should want the Interest of any Friends of his Acquaintance ; but as I thought whatever it were, it would serve as a plausible Pretence for the Perplexity he found me in, I pretended not to be wholly ignorant of what

he came about, but begg'd him to repeat it, having had, as I said, but an imperfect Account.

Nay, Madam, answered he, it ought not to alarm you——those kind of Impositions are frequent here, and I do not question but all will be set right in a Day or two——'tis true, the Affair might occasion a good deal of Trouble to some Ladies, but with you, Madam, whose Beauty and Accomplishments have interested all the Court in your Favour, it is quite otherwise; and if there were no other Persons than the Marquis *De L——V——* and myself, and the Count here, to espouse your Cause, I dare answer we should be sufficient to maintain it, against all such impudent Pretenders.

Judge kind Reader, how greatly this Prelude heightened my Curiosity, Monsieur *De Saint Fal*, guessing at my Impatience, and feeling no small Share of it himself, desired the Duke not to keep me in Suspence, but relate what he knew of this Adventure.

I think myself obliged to do so, replied he, because perhaps it may have reach'd this Lady's Ear, in a manner very different from Truth. About four Hours ago, Madam, a Woman of much the same Age with your Ladyship, tho' not a thousandth Part so lovely, sent in your Name, to beg a Moment's Audience of me ; I was at that Time very full of Company, but not imagining it could be any other than yourself, I quitted them immediately, and went into another Room to receive you ; but I was strangely surpriz'd to find instead of you, a Person I had never seen before——as I did not offer to disguise it, your Grace, said she, is not the only one, who expresses an Astonishment at seeing me, I have heard the whole Court is prejudiced in Favour of a Woman, who has taken my Name upon her, and pretending that the *Count de Roches* was killed in the Service, has received a handsome Present from the King: my Husband, continued she, Heaven be praised, is still living, tho' in an ill state of Health, and unable to solicit for himself, has sent me to *Verfailles* to implore some Portion of his Majesty's Bounty, nor should doubt the Success of my Petition, had not this Imposition prevented me.

That

That Word, Madam, continued he, obliged me to hinder her proceeding any further, I told her that nothing but the Consideration of her Sex, prevented me from treating very ill, a Person who should take upon herself the Name of a Lady, whom I was well acquainted with, and had the greatest Respect for ; so advised her to make no farther mention of so impertinent an Affair ; and added, that if I heard any more of it, I should be less scrupulous in what Manner I resented it.

To this she replied, that it was very unjust to prefer the counterfeit to the real Person ; but that she saw how matters went, and would complain to the War Office ; for as to the Favours received from the King in her Name, she did not so much regard that loss, as the giving out that her Husband was dead, by which Report his Commission might be disposed of to another, and his Family ruined—she said much more to the same purpose, but I was not of a Disposition to hear her, and she went muttering away——since this, I have been told, she has actually presented a Petition to the Council of War, and offer'd to produce a Certificate from the Colonel of the Regiment, in which she affirms her Husband is a Captain.

The Secretary has just now sent me a Detail of this Affair, and seems inclinable to believe the Clamour she makes has some Foundation ; I am therefore, now come, Madam, continued he, to know in what manner you would have me act ; for I believe we shall be obliged to prove at the Office, that no Fraud has been put in practice, and that tho' there should happen to be another of the same Name, yet that you are the Widow of one Count *De Roches*, who died in the Service, and the Person whose Name was inserted in the Memorial I presented in your Behalf ; and if you will take my Advice, you will immediately put the thing past Dispute, by giving an account of the Place and Particulars of your Husband's Death, that a proper Enquiry may be made, and your Ladyship acknowledged for what you are.

The Count, who all the Time the Duke was speaking seemed in a deep Study, no less perplexed than myself, as he had innocently been the Cause of this new Trouble

to me, answered with a Gaiety, which very much surpriz'd me, that the Woman who called herself the Countess *De Roches*, could only be a Cheat ; for said he this Lady can bring sufficient Proofs, in two Hour's Time, who she is.——But, pursued he, turning to me, I remember you told me that urgent Business obliged you to go out, tho' your Politeness would not permit you to say so before his Grace——you may therefore, I suppose, defer giving the Proof expected from you 'till to-morrow ? ——O by all means, replied the Duke, any time within these three Days will suffice ; and I am extremely concerned, if my Visit has detain'd the Lady a Moment, from prosecuting her Intentions. I saw that the Count had said this for no other Reason than to get rid of the Duke, that we might consult together on what was to be done, and said, that indeed the Affair which called me abroad, was such as could not be well dispensed with, and hoped his Grace would pardon a Rudeness, which Necessity enforced. He said a thousand polite Things in Answer to this, and took his Leave : *Saint Fal* went out with him to avoid Suspicion, but gave me to understand by a Sign, that he would soon be with me again.

After I was alone, if one can be said so to be with a thousand tormenting Ideas, I grew more resolute than ever to quit *Versailles*, this last Adventure had indeed rendered my Departure absolutely necessary, and the Count returning immediately, I expressed such an Impatience to be gone, that he had nothing to oppose against it. This generous Friend was perfectly overwhelm'd with Grief, for having given me this new Disturbance, by making me pass for the Countess *De Roches*, but as he knew not there was any such Person in being, it was impossible for him to foresee the ill Consequences attending what he had done ; but I told him it availed nothing to reflect on the past, Time was too precious to be lost in Discourses of this Nature, and I must now think of securing myself, from any such Vexations for the future ; I therefore reiterated my Request, of being conducted to a Monastery, whence, I said, nothing should prevail upon me to go out, for the whole remainder of my Life.

Monseigneur

Monfieur *De Saint Fal* perceiving I was fo bent upon it, and that all he had faid to diffuade me, ferved only to make me find more Arguments for what I had determined, very artfully defifted any Attempt to alter my Opinion, but told me, that 'till things were prepared for my being received into a Convent, it was proper I fhould retire fomewhere. This I agreed to, and the next Morning was fix'd for my parting from *Verfailles*; and in order to deceive Madam *De Genneval*, whom we had all the Reason in the World to diftruft, *Saint Fal* acquainted her, that being ftraitned for Room, I had taken a Houfe, which I intended to furnifh, expecting very foon an Increate of my Family——She who fufpected nothing of the Truth, made answer that fhe was forry to lofe me, but fupposed I was going to be married, and as foon as I thought proper to declare it, would not fail coming to congratulate me. The Count answer'd her only with a Smile, and that inquisitive Woman imagining the Thing was as fhe faid, enquired no more about it.

Early the next Morning, as we had concerted, all my Furniture was taken down; but inftead of being removed to the Place intimated to Madam *De Genneval*, it was conveyed by one of the Count's Servants to *Paris*, on Carriages hired for that Purpofe.

Just before my Departure, I fent for Monfieur *Melicourt* and acquainted him with my Journey, and the Motives of my undertaking it; promifing to write to him, as foon as I was fix'd, that he might fend me an Account of his Affairs from Time to Time. He testified the utmoft Senfe of my Regard for him, and faid he hoped to be at *Paris*, in a fhort Time, and would then infallibly wait upon me

When we defire moft Secrecy, Fortune for the moft Part throws fomething in the Way to endanger a Difcovery——*Saint Fal* fet out before me on Horfeback, and was to wait for me at a fmall Village near *Verfailles*, I went with *Barbara* in a Poft-Chaife, which he had provided for me, and was bleffing Heaven, for having made my Escape without any crofs Accident interveening,
when

when turning towards the great Alley, I met a Coach and Six, in which I saw the old Marquis *De L—V—*, he pass'd close by me, and tho' I was pretty much muffled up, I could discern he knew me, by the Earnestness of his Looks and a Smile; what he discovered in my Countenance I know not, but I believe there was Confusion and Fear easy to be read in it, but we presently lost Sight of him: My Chaise went at a great rate, and pursued the Road to *Paris*, and his Coach drove on to *Versailles*. As he did not stop, nor as I could perceive sent any Body after me, I flattered myself, that the Surprise I had been in, was all the Consequence of this Rencounter.

Tho' I had but a short Way to go before I met the Count, yet did many Reflections run through my Mind in that Time,——the Unkindness of my dear Marquis was still the most predominant—He no longer loves me, cried I to myself, he abandons me to be the Sport of Fortune, and interests himself no more in what ever shall befall me——Ah! that I could behave with the same Indifference to him——that I could free my Heart from his too enchanting Image,——I am told I am formed for soft Desires—that Love has the greatest Share in my Composition, why then cannot I reward the Services of the most generous Man on Earth—the complaisant, the tender, the faithful *Saint Fal*——he never would have used me thus——I then began to think how happy I might be, if I could once bring myself to love the Count——and, as in these Moments I wish'd to do so, I took Pains to recollect all he had done for me, his Disinterestedness, his Politeness, his noble Behaviour, and when I made a Comparison between the Marquis and him, with regard to me, the one seemed an ungrateful, the other a constant Lover; and tho' I was far from being able to change the Object of my Passion, yet I look'd on it as a Proof of the greatest Weakness in me. These Meditations remained with me, 'till I arrived at the Place appointed, and *Saint Fal* waited for me with a livery Coach, into which I went with him, and set *Barbara* on a Horse, sending back the Chaise, in order to prevent the Place I was going to, from being suspected.

No Difficulties attended our Journey, we arrived at *Paris* in good Time, and *Saint Fal* conducted me to a neat handſome Apartment, conſiſting of four Rooms and a Kitchen. I thanked him in the moſt obliging Manner, for the Care he had taken of every Thing, and thinking myſelf happy in ſuch a Friend, appeared infinitely more chearful than could be expected from a Perſon in the Situation I then was in, and the Deſpair I had ſo lately teſtified : He was charmed with the Change he found in me, and as he has ſince acknowledged, nothing but the Apprehenſions that betraying any Transports might have rendered me more determined of retiring to a Cloyſter, hindered him from throwing himſelf at my Feet, and expreſſing his Satisfaction in the moſt tender and paſſionate Terms——what a Proof of Delicacy did he give in putting this Reſtraint upon himſelf——how few Men there are that are capable of acting in that manner, and how much ought a Woman that contracts a Friendſhip with ſuch a one to value him !

We ſupp'd together, and the next Day he came again to viſit me, I would needs keep him to dine, and after the Cloth was taken away, he deſired I would examine my little Library, to which he told me he had made ſome Addition. I complied with his Requeſt, and found ſeveral entertaining Books, which I had never ſeen before ; among them were the celebrated Novels of *Madam de Gomez*, the Title of one pleaſing me extremely, I ſingled it out with a Deſign of amuſing myſelf with it, after he was gone, and this gave him an Opportunity of entring into a Diſcourſe of thoſe little Treatiſes.

There is nothing, ſaid he, that gives a better turn to the Mind, than reading ſuch Hiſtories, wrote in this manner, for whether there be any thing of reality in them or not, Virtue is always inculcated——a Nobleneſs of Soul is always repreſented in the moſt lively Colour, and it's contrary rendered ſo diſagreeable, that whoever finds in themſelves the leaſt likeneſs of ſuch a Picture, will, if not hardned in Vice, endeavour to put another mode upon their way of Thinking. Beſides, there are many who would fly a grave Remonſtrance, are inſenſibly led
by

by the gay turn generally found in Writings of this Nature to imitate the good Examples contained in them——no Instruction makes so great an Impression on the Mind, as that which is conveyed through the Canal of Pleasure——there is a Love of Liberty so inherent to Mankind, that any Thing that carries with it the air of Compulsion is sure to be avoided ; but it is my Opinion, that the roughest Nature in the World may be soothed into Good-manners, and be capable of doing every Thing that can be wished, when the Change shall seem to come from itself alone.

He said many more things to the same Purpose, and concluded with an Apology for having been so tedious ; for, said he, I fear I am so unfortunate as not to enter upon those Subjects of Conversation that are most agreeable to you. I assured him that he could speak of very few Things, that would not be rendered so by his manner of expressing. He returned this Complement with a low Bow, and then said, charming *Jeanetta*, how truly amiable is your Mind, that can lay such a Restraint on yourself to oblige your Friends. I have now enjoyed the Pleasure of your Society for almost two Days, yet you have never once mentioned the Marquis ; in speaking these Words, he looked me full in the Face, as tho' he would read my inmost Thoughts, whatever Gloss I might put upon them by my Words.

I felt my Heart flutter, and an unusual Warmth o'respread my Cheeks at that Instant ; but calling all my Courage to my Aid, why my Lord, cried I, would you remind me of a Man I am desirous of forgetting ?——why would you recall any Reflections of what has been, since it is now so no more ?——the Struggle is hard ; but still I flatter myself Reason will get the better of an ill-treated Softness——no, continued I, with an Air of Haughtiness, great as he is by Blood, his Instability, his Inconstancy sets him below my Notice——perhaps even now he offers to another those Vows, that Heart he a thousand Times has sworn should never be but mine.

Oh !

Oh! what a Medley is a Lover's Mind! what contradictory Ideas rise in the same Instant thwarting each other; while I spoke, Indignation and Tenderness had an equal share in my divided Heart——at once I hated and loved. The Count was too quick-sighted not to discover this Truth, and with a Sigh which seemed to rend his Breast, Ah, *Jeanetta!* *Jeanetta*, cried he! this Anger of yours informs me but too well of what I longed, yet feared to know——the Marquis still is, and will be ever dear to you, and *Saint Fal* forever wretched—but I revere and adore the Mouth that pronounces my Doom, and before eight Days are past, will give you a convincing Proof, that my Passion for you is greater even than yours for my too agreeable Cousin, and that is going to the greatest height it can arrive at.

The Surprise I was in at these Words, whose Meaning I could not comprehend, and yet seemed to imply some great Design, shewed itself in my eager Reply. What Proofs, cried I, and in so short a Time?——what relation can any Proof of your Affection have to that of the Marquis?

Alas! resumed he, how impossible is it for you, Madam, to conceal how precious he is to you!——you would not have been thus impatient for unriddling this Mystery, had my Words regarded only myself; but, for your Punishment, added he, with a forced Smile, I will not ease you of this Suspence, till I have your Promise not to think of going to a Monastery till my return.

Return! said I, more amazed, whether are you going? Ah, my Lord, you will not forsake me sure, till you have seen me settled according to my wish? How obliging, replied he, would be that fear in other Circumstances——Ah! Count, interrupted I, can you make a doubt of the Friendship I have for you, which I owe to you, and which you are so truly worthy of——take not a Pleasure therefore in giving me these Alarms——what Riddle is this, that is not to be solved, but on Condition?——I conjure you add not to my Disquiets that of Uncertainty——believe I cannot rest
while

while I think there is any thing relating to you that requires Concealment.

Ah! Madam, cried he, lifting up his Eyes, how greatly am I indebted to your Friendship——would to Heaven the least share of this kind Concern proceeded from a softer Motive; but I must be content, nor suffer you to continue longer in Suspense——know then, most adorable of your Sex, pursued he, that my Duty calls me to the Army, where I ought to have been sooner, if I could have prevailed on myself to have left you surrounded with the Perplexities you were in at *Versailles*; but as you are now without all Question, safe from my Uncle's Enquiries, I go with more Tranquility——I shall see the Marquis the Moment I reach the Regiment, and in eight Days time you shall have an Account of his Behaviour, and Sentiments concerning you——whatever they may be at present, I shall soon convince him how deserving you are of his Affection, and probably my Letter to you will be accompanied with one from him no less satisfactory, than the last you received from him was the contrary.

O Love, how powerful art thou! the Count had no sooner given me hopes of being still dear to the Marquis, and that I again should see him, the fond, the engaging Adorer he had been, than my Soul imbibed the rapturous Idea, and felt immeasurable Delight——I now no longer regretted the Departure of Monsieur *de Saint Fal*, on the contrary I wished him gone——my Thoughts out-strip'd the Wind; he had not left off speaking a Moment before my Imagination presented him talking to my Lover, attesting my Innocence, all Things cleared up, the dear Man at my Feet, entreating Pardon for his unjust Suspicions, a Reconciliation, mutual Transports, and ten Thousand Day-Dreams, which none but those who love with an equal share of Warmth and Delicacy can be capable of concealing.

Monsieur *de Saint Fal* pretending not to observe what passed in my Heart, tho' as he afterwards told me it was easy enough to be read in my Countenance, entertained me on indifferent Things, for which I was not a little disobliged;

disobliged: I had forbid him to speak of the Marquis to me, but I now did not thank him for obeying my Commands: The flattering Idea of being again beloved by him, so took up all my Thoughts, that I wished to speak of no other Topick.

At last this noble spirited Friend took his leave, and while doing so, I could perceive some Tears trickle down his Cheeks, in spite of his Endeavours to restrain them, and just as he left the Room, beautiful *Jeanetta*, said he, make yourself as easy as possible,——be assured you shall soon hear of me, and of him likewise whom you most wish to be informed of: These Words reminding me that he saw through all the Efforts I made for disquising my Affection for the Marquis, made me call him back, and engage the most solemn Promise from him not to interfere too far in my behalf—the Thought of making any advances on my Part, was equal almost to the loss of him, and in spite of all my Tenderness, I disdained to owe his return to any other motive than his Love. I made him also give me his Word and Honour to write me a full Account of all that passed between him and his Cousin with regard to me, without suppressing the least Circumstance on any Consideration whatever; and in return for this, assured him I would not make any alteration in my way of Life, much less think of a Monastery till he returned.

The first Day after the Departure of this incomparable Friend I was very much dejected: Solitude seemed frightful to me, and indeed it must be confessed, that a young Person such as I was, without any Acquaintance, any Diversion, must be at a great loss how to pass her Time——my only Comfort was in the expectation of hearing soon from the Camp; the charming hope that *Saint Fal* had inspired me with of the Marquis's still loving me, gave me sometimes such Spirits, that whoever had seen me would not have suspected I had any thing to trouble me; but then at others I had different Sentiments, and could not persuade myself I should ever see him more——I was one Moment all Extasy of Joy——the next all Sorrow and Despair——hoping, doubting, perplexed, I would walk whole
Hours

Hours together, backwards and forwards, looked through the Windows, without having any Object in view—went from one Room to another, without knowing why, and fatigued myself more than if I had been employed in some laborious Work: when the Mind is greatly oppress'd it always obliges the Body to feel some share.

At last I betook myself to Reading, and the Relief I found in it is inexpressible. *La Belle Assemblée* was a Book that infinitely pleased me: the vast Variety of Adventures it contains, the many fine, and always just Quotations from History, both amus'd and instructed me, while the excellent Lessons of Virtue and Morality every where inculcated, serv'd to strengthen me in those Principles, I had always made it my Resolution to continue in. Next to this, I was most delighted with the Works of Messieurs *De Crebillon* and *De Marivaux*; had it not been an Indecorum, for a young Woman, to seek the Acquaintance of Men, I should have endeavour'd to have obtain'd theirs; and very much envy'd the Happiness of those who enjoy'd the Conversation of such agreeable Persons. Nor do I think myself to blame in this particular, 'tis ungrateful, methinks, not to allow some Portion of our Favour to those whose Writings please us; and, also, a very high Injustice to suffer ourselves to admire the Books, and at the same Time despise the Authors, 'tho' this is too common a Practice: And since I have come to more knowledge of the World, I have often observed Volumes in the Libraries of the great, most richly bound and gilt, while those who have laid out their Brains in the composing them, have been cloath'd in Rags; but then it must be confess'd, that it is only among a certain Number, who have taken it into their Heads to discourage every thing, that has more Wit than themselves. For my own Part, I shall always acknowledge, that if I have any thing amiable in Conversation, I owe that Advantage to Reading; and I would recommend to all those of my Sex, who would wish to create a lasting Admiration, to pass a great Part of their Time in a Closet of well chosen Books.

Time, in this Employment, glided away with much less Anxiety than it had done before, and I began to find no want of any other Society, 'till one Morning as I was getting out of Bed, my Ears were agreeably surpriz'd with one of the most melodious Voices I had ever heard. I could easily distinguish it proceeded from a Person of my own Sex, and was in the Apartment over me: from that Moment I wish'd to be acquainted with her, and *Barbara* informing me, that it was a young Lady who lodged in that Floor, I sent my Compliments to her with an Invitation to come down; she very readily complied with my Request, and in the Afternoon made me a Visit.

Her Appearance was no less agreeable than her Voice had been, she was three or four and twenty, had a fine Face and Shape, and somewhat in her Air that made me think her a Woman of Condition, which her Discourse afterward confirmed, she making mention of several Persons of Quality, who were related to her.

She had besides her other Perfections an infinity of Wit, and even in this first Visit so agreeably entertain'd me, that I was quite impatient for a second. She seem'd to have taken no less a Fancy to me, and we became in a short Time as intimate, as if we had known each other from our Infancy.

We dined together almost every Day, but generally pass'd the Afternoon in our respective Apartments, I express'd so much my Desire of living a retired Life, that she, who saw a great deal of Company, did not judge it proper to break in upon my Manner, any more than I to be a Witness of who came to her——in fine, we had our Reasons for being separate at those Hours, tho' mine were vastly different from hers, as it afterwards proved.

Indeed, I was so charmed with her Conversation, that could I have enjoyed it alone, I could have been glad never to have been separated from her; but an Adventure soon after happened, which shewed me, she had a way of living, which I little suspected, and also convinced me how dangerous a thing it is, to enter into an Intimacy with a Person of one's own Sex, without being previously acquainted

quainted with their Morals and Characters. What hazards do young Creatures, with any tolerable Share of Beauty run, when left to themselves ! How little are they able to foresee the Snares laid for them, too often by their own Sex ! Without a great deal of Prudence, and that too supported by Advice, Virtue may be surprized into Ruin, even when it thinks itself most safe——Happy is it for me, I did not buy this Experience too dear ; for which I think myself not all indebted to my own Discretion, but, as I have often said, to the Interposition of an all-ruling Providence, which ever snatch'd me from the Precipice of Infamy and Destruction, when I was the nearest falling into it.

One Evening, I was reflecting with great Anxiety, that I had not yet heard from the Camp : Monsieur the Count *De Saint Fal*, having ever been the most punctual Man in the World, and as he had assured me that he would write immediately on his Arrival, nothing could be more strange, than that three whole Weeks were elapsed without my receiving any Letter. My Imagination therefore was on the Rack, to assign some Motive for this Omission, when Mademoiselle *Junia*, for so my new Acquaintance was called, came into my Chamber, and ask'd me if I would not do her the Favour to sup with her. I have been unusually dull all this Day said she, I know nothing but yourself that can dissipate a Melancholy for which I can ascribe no Cause——come then, my Dear, and help to chase away this Fit of the Spleen. The Humour I was in that Moment, so much resembled what she described, that I presently accepted her Invitation, and went with her into her Apartment.

The Entertainment she gave me was very elegant, and render'd much more so by her enlivening Conversation, as dull as she pretended to have been, her sparkling Wit adding a thousand Graces to all the little Stories she told for my Amusement infinitely charin'd me——in the height of her Gaiety, however, she let fall some Words which I could not sincerely approve, and sometimes made me look very grave, but she rallied me upon
my

my over great Nicety, as she termed it, mimicking the Countenance I put on, whenever she said any thing that I thought seemed too free, and by that Means obliged me to quit it for a Smile. Are we not alone, said she, and may we not, as we are of the same Sex, indulge a little Liberty in Conversation, by way of Compensation, for the severe Restraint we are obliged to put on ourselves before the Men.

This Woman was certainly the most artful Creature that ever was, as will appear by the Stratagem she had contrived to bring about, what by any other Means she imagined impracticable. As short as our Acquaintance was, she might easily be convinced I was virtuous — I had no Men that visited me, I liv'd without doing any thing for my Support, so that all she could think was, that I was a young Widow in good Circumstances, and so much concern'd for the loss of my Husband, that I avoided all Company. I had been one Day at Church with her, where an Acquaintance of hers seeing me, became very much enamour'd with me; and, as it afterwards proved, engaged her to introduce him to my Company. But this was no easy thing for her to do, though in Order to effect it, she had for several Days press'd me to make one at *Quadrille* in her Apartment; but I plainly told her, I was resolv'd to make no new Acquaintance, and excepting herself, would see no Company; on which she gave over her Importunities; but not her Design upon me, the Baseness of which will presently appear, and the narrow Escape I had, I hope will be a Warning to my Sex, how they enter too precipitately into any Intimacy with Strangers.

In order to cheer my Spirits, as she said, this insinuating Creature was continually filling my Glass with a small Muscadine Wine, the Flavour of which, notwithstanding my natural Temperance, pleas'd me so much, that I drank more than was customary with me. By Degrees I grew exceeding chearful, and at last went so far as a Song, which till then I had never done in her Company. Mademoiselle *Junia* was so delighted with the Sweetness of my Voice, or pretended to be so, that

I was easily prevail'd upon to sing again ; and when I had done, well, said she, you are certainly in the right to shut yourself up from the Men, for if they once were acquainted with you, you would have no Truce from their Sollicitations

I was not indebted to her for this Compliment, but return'd it with equal Politeness, and I am sure with much more Sincerity. After which, looking on me with a great deal of Sweetness, you little know how frolicsome I am, said she ; but as much as you praise me, and imagine yourself acquainted with my Shape and Air, I would venture any Wager you will not believe, presently, that I am the real *Junia* your Friend. I offer'd to stake on that Head ; no, no, resumed she, I am certain of your losing, and don't desire to win your Money. I'll tell you, therefore, before-hand, how I will disguise myself: I love prodigiously to act the Part of a Man, my Woman can tell you how naturally I do it, and have a rich Suit for that Purpose, whenever I have a Mind to be innocently merry.——I'll go and dress myself, continued she, and you shall hear how I can make Love. I burst out into a Fit of Laughter at the Oddity of this Whim ; but told her, that I was positive that whatever Disguise she put on, she would be always agreeable.

Just as I was speaking, somebody knock'd at the Door? Ah! my good God, cry'd she, who is this now, that comes to interrupt us? Go——continued she to her Chambermaid, see who it is, I am not at home to any body but my dear *Saint Clare*——she will join with us in the Frolick ; but as for any other, make some Excuse.

This Order made me easy, for besides that I was not dress'd, I had laid it down as a Rule, that I would see no Company. The Lady whom *Junia* had mentioned enter'd immediately, and was so agreeable, that I was not at all concern'd she had been admitted. Having been inform'd of the little Comedy her Friend was going to act ; I am glad of it, said she, for though I have seen you do it a hundred Times, I believe, yet I should
never

never be weary: You cannot imagine, Madam, continued she, addressing herself to me, how very diverting she is——you would swear she was a real Man. About six Months ago, she was thus disguised in the Country——made Love to a very pretty Woman, who, knowing nothing of the Deception, was charm'd with her in good earnest; the unravelling the Mystery was whimsical enough, for though she had resolv'd never to marry, the Addresses of *Junia* gave her an Inclination in Favour of the Sex; and in a Fortnight after, she became the Wife of one who for Years had pursued her in vain. This Story made me laugh, and begin to be impatient for the Proof how good a Mimick she was——she did not make me wait long, for going into another Room with her Maid, in order to dress as she said, left *Saint Clare* to entertain me in the mean Time.

In less time than I expected out came a Gentleman richly habited, he threw himself at my Feet, and behaved with all the Tenderneſs of the most respectful Lover.——*Mademoiselle Saint Clare* laugh'd immoderately, and every Moment cry'd to me, does she not do it excellently; beyond Imagination, answer'd I; but why does she wear a Vizard? If we had laid any Wager on my not knowing her in this Habit, if that had not been out of the Question, I should have taken the Liberty to have drawn Stakes. O! said the other, she wears that Mask, which is very handsome, to make the thing look more natural; we Women you know have always a certain Modesty in our Faces, which does not agree with a Masculine Habit. This pass'd very well with me, and I suffer'd my Gallant to press my Hands, and caress me in a very amorous Manner; on which growing more bold, he put his Arm about my Waist, and I to revenge myself attempted to pluck off his Mask; then seeming offended at my Coyness he carried his Devoirs to *Saint Clare*, then turned to me again; while I suspecting no manner of Deceit, suffer'd myself to be very much diverted with this Metamorphosis, for I believe near an Hour; but, good God! how was I thunderstruck, when I heard the supposed *Junia* say to *Saint Clare*, I

am quite tired of this dumb Shew, for Heaven's sake contrive some way to put an End to it——she is a lovely Creature.

How ought I to bless Providence, who that Instant, frightened as I was, inspired me with a Presence of Mind to avoid the Snare laid for me. I found now the Trick put upon me, and that all had been a Pretence to introduce a Man, who could have no other than a dishonourable Intention, and this also manifesting what Company I was in, terribly alarm'd me : However, I shewed not the least Uneasiness, but under the Pretence of giving some Orders, which I had just then thought of, to *Barbara*, I went down Stairs, and being got into my Apartment, made all the Doors to be fast locked and bolted.

As I did not return, *Junia* came down, and knock'd at the Door ; but my Aunt *Barbara*, to whom I had told the Story, refused to open it, saying I was not well and was going to Bed. The other insisted on speaking to me, as did Mademoiselle *Saint Clare* who also came down ; but all their Entreaties were ineffectual, and they were obliged to go back.

Though I was very positive in my Mind, that it was really a Man whom *Junia* had substituted in her Place, yet I was resolved to be more assured that I did not wrong her by a false Conjecture ; I sat up till I heard *Saint Clare* come down, and looking through the Key-hole, could perceive she was led by the very Person whom they would have imposed upon me for *Junia* : Though they spoke very low, I being very attentive, heard enough to convince me, my Ruin had been agreed upon, and to have been compleated that Night. I shudder'd while I reflected on the intended monstrous Piece of Villany, and resolved henceforward to be very circumspect, and always upon my Guard.

Junia, who no doubt expected to have been a considerable Gainer had her Plot succeeded, could not but be very much mortified at the Disappointment ; she had the Assurance, as what will not Women of her Character attempt, to come the next Morning to make me a Visit, but *Barbara* would not admit her : She complain'd

plain'd of this Usage, and said, she thought I had been a Woman of more Sense, than to quarrel with her for a harmless Frolick; all which I taking no Notice of, she wrote to me, but I sent her Letter back unopen'd; and she, finding my Resentment was not to be appeas'd; and, I suppose, fearing I might speak of this Adventure, so as to have her manner of Life call'd in question, removed in three Days after from her Lodging, and I for some time neither saw nor heard any thing of her.

I had now sufficient Matter to employ my Thoughts, I receiv'd two Letters, the one from the Camp, and the other from *Versailles*; as I could not imagine who should write to me from thence, having left no Acquaintance behind me, that I could suppose knew I was at *Paris*, my Curiosity prevail'd, even above my Love for the Marquis; and though I passionately long'd to hear some News of him, yet the first I open'd was that from *Versailles*, where to my inexpressible Astonishment I found these Lines.

The Marquis De L———V——— to
Jeanetta de B———.

IN vain you fly me———in vain flatter yourself with
deceiving my Penetration———whatever Quality
you assume, or wherever you conceal yourself, I shall al-
ways know where you are, and in what manner you pass
your Time.———I can easily comprehend how much this
will alarm you, and the Apprehensions which must natu-
rally rise in you, at so unexpected an Event; but they
ought to vanish, when I give you my Word and Honour,
that so far from doing you a Prejudice, the Knowledge I
have of you, shall turn wholly to your Advantage.———
Believe me, beautiful Maid, I am more your Friend,
than ever I was your Enemy, and instead of punishing
you am resolved to fix your lasting Happiness.———
Doubt not of what I say,———a Man of my Age,
and Character in the World is above Deceit, and on no
Consideration can be tempted to break a Promise once
made.

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made.——Be you on your Part as sincere——an open Confidence in me will make me more your Friend, than you can possibly imagine.——Above all things, therefore, beware how you enter into any Measures that the Fear of me may suggest. To morrow I shall be at Paris, where I expect you will not endeavour to avoid my Visit; and as I am acquainted with your Virtue, it will be your own Fault if you don't receive convincing Proofs of the Value I set upon it.——One Trial more is all you will be put to——I am much mistaken, if, like Gold, you will not shine brighter by the Test, and then, charming Jeanetta, you will have Reason to bless the Channel which brought you to meet me at the Inn.

Your Godfather and Friend,

L———V———.

If my Reader does not here help me out with the Force of Imagination, it will be impossible for any Description I am able to give, to form a true Idea of what I felt after reading this Letter.——Heavens! cry'd I, have pity on me and assist me!——What can have occasion'd so strange an Alteration?——What can be the old Marquis's Designs?——How can he fix my Happiness?——What Trial is it he will make me undergo?——Ah, said I again, it is too plain——his Son has given me up——renounced me, and to put a sure End to any future Claim I might make, has barbarously sacrificed me to his Father's Regretments——it must be so, continued I, this incensed Parent satisfied with this, lays aside his Hatred and Revenge, and either through Generosity or Policy, will settle me in such a manner, as to prevent any future Interourse between me and my ungrateful Lover, in case he should relent, and be willing to perform his Vows.——This is what he calls fixing my Happiness, and my well enduring it, is the Trial he mentions——well then——let it be so.——I no longer will attempt to fly from an unavoidable Destiny.——I will submit with Fortitude and Patience to my Doom, and if
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it be a Cloister, will pass the remainder of my Days in Warnings to my Sex, to beware of the faithless Vows of barbarous, inconstant Man!

These Exclamations were succeeded by a Torrent of Tears, which gush'd in such Abundance from my Eyes, that for some time I had not Power to read my other Letter.—Nor, indeed, was my Impatience for the Contents, in any Proportion equal to what it had been; I expected to find in it nothing but Confirmations of the young Marquis's Ingratitude and Cruelty; however, I at last ventured to open it, and received a fresh Subject for Tears and Complaining.

To the most adorable Jeanetta.

I Should not till now have delay'd Writing, had I not hoped Day after Day to have received the News of something material to have acquainted you with; but none being yet arriv'd, the Apprehensions of suspecting me capable of neglecting what you so earnestly recommended to me, has made me at last take up my Pen, though I have nothing to say, but what will be rather disagreeable than pleasing. However, to comply with my Promise of concealing nothing from you; in the first Place, I was so unhappy as not to meet the Marquis at my Arrival at the Camp, he being gone on a Expedition, on which at his own Request he was sent.—As he is not returned, all his Friends are in great Anxiety for his Safety, and they also inform me that he came hither overwhelm'd with a deep Melancholy, which he vainly endeavour'd to conceal; and it is supposed that it is owing to a Desire of diverting this inward Grief that he procured this Command.—I was not at a loss to guess the Cause of his Affliction; you cannot but be sensible, too lovely Jeanetta, of the great Share you have in it.—I beg, however, that you will not give way to Sorrow, 'tis possible before this comes to your Hand, we may receive some News of this dear Relation, and you may be assured of having it conveyed to you by a Courier, whom I will dispatch the Instant.

128 *The Virtuous Villager ; or,*

It is supposed the Campaign will be short, and that after a Battle, which is every Day expected, and much desired, we shall be sent into Quarters. This Notion is very delightful to me; since I shall then have an Opportunity of being near you; for tho' in the present Circumstances, I trouble you with nothing relating to myself, be assured I can know no Happiness equal to that of seeing you, nor any Merit above that of deserving by all manner of laudable Acts, your Friendship and Esteem. These will ever be the Sentiments of him, who is,

With an unalterable Zeal,

Most charming JEANETTA,

Your faithfully devoted,

SAINT FAL.

One is never sensible oneself how great our Tenderness for a beloved Object is, till we are in Danger of losing it——my Notion of War was certainly very imperfect, yet no sooner did I know the Marquis's Life was in Question, than my Imagination represented it with all its Horrors——O, Heaven! cried I, half drowned in Tears, why am I overwhelm'd with so many Afflictions at once!——how shall I be enabled to endure such a variety of Anguish——O, grant my Lover to be safe——protect him, bless him, whatever shall become of me——tho' he forsakes me——resolves no more to see me, his Welfare shall ever be the Wish of my adoring Soul.

It would be too tedious to relate the thousandth Part of what my Grief made me utter on this Occasion, I fear I have already made too much mention of my Tears; but the Time will come when I have nothing but Joys to entertain my Reader with, and this Truth demonstrated, that the Happiness which Virtue obtains for us, can never be too dearly purchased.

Although, I had sufficient Notice of the old Marquis's Visit, to prepare myself for it, I found myself terribly confounded as the Time drew near; and when
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he came, received him with, a Timidity which indeed was sufficient to have excited his Pity, if he had not already, as it afterwards proved, been already so greatly prepossessed in my Favour, as to imagine, that let me do what I would every thing became me.

As I was now assured he knew the vast Disparity between us, is it possible, my Lord, said I, receiving him with great Humility, and presenting him a Chair, that your Lordship can condescend to see me after the Discovery you have made——to what am I indebted for an Honour I am so utterly unworthy of——and in what manner shall a poor Country-Maid, and one who has been so unhappy to incur your Displeasure, be able to look you in the Face? Let us talk no more of that, beautiful *Jeanetta*, replied he, making me sit down——I have no longer the Causes of Complaint I had formerly against you——I was misled by the idle Stories which I now find had no Foundation in them, and your Virtue, of which I have received convincing Proofs, has excited in me a due regard for the fair Possessor of it——a mean Birth is meerly casual, and none ought to be upbraided with it, but when Vice renders it truly so——a fine way of Thinking, and good Actions, raises the Peasant above the Prince, when Royalty degrades itself by a low Behaviour——you, *Jeanetta*, are very sensible of this Truth, and have regulated your Conduct, so as to wipe off all Remembrance whence you sprung——This, however, is not the Affair that brought me hither, what I have to say to you is of a different Nature; but before I explain myself any farther, I expect you will inform me with that Sincerity, which is always the Attendant of Innocence and Honour, upon what terms you are with my Son; I have very great Reasons for asking you this Question, and if you give me a full and perfect Account, it will lay an Obligation on me more to your Advantage than you can yet conceive.

From the Moment I received the Marquis's Letter, and knew he intended to visit me, I expected to suffer an infinite Shock from the Conversation I was to have

with him, so was the less alarmed at what he said to me, tho' on the most tender Point he could have hit upon.

It would be in vain, my Lord, answered I after a Moment's Pause, to deny that your Son has been dear to me ; the amiable Qualities he is possess'd of, might have rendered him so to the noblest Maid, how then could a Girl like me resist the charming Condescension he made me in an Offer of his Heart ?——Was it possible to refuse the Acceptance of a Treasure such as his Affection, and could I, ought I to return his Vows with indifference ?——Pardon me, my Lord, continued I, you have commanded me to give you a perfect Account, and I will disguise no Part of the Truth——I did love the Marquis, I might make use of the Word *Esteem* instead of *Love*, but I will not impose upon you ; I did love your Son with the utmost Sincerity, and had not his late Behaviour forbid it, I should still preserve the same Regard ;——I dare not say I do not still, even in spite of all the Reasons I have to the contrary, I do not pretend to know myself so well, as to be assured I either have, or ever can throw off a Tenderness, I once thought my Gratitude as well as Inclination obliged me to confess. This, my Lord, is all I can say, and Heaven and your own great Experience in the World, I hope, will make you see I have not dissembled with you.

The Tone with which I spoke these Words, and the Blushes that accompanied them, I believe pleaded very much in my Favour, however it were, the old Marquis appeared charmed with the manner in which I had expressed myself. This free Confession, said he, enhances the Esteem I before had for you——continue to treat me with the same Sincerity, and you may depend upon it, I shall never abuse the Confidence you repose in me——I have but one thing more to be resolved in——tell me, my pretty Creature, continued he, looking full in my Eyes, as if he would penetrate into the inmost Recesses of my Soul, tell me I say, what your Designs are, and own from whom you receive, wherewith to supply the Expences of your Living ? While my Son and Nephew were here, I could easily account for it ;
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but suppose you should never hear more from either of them, how will you be able to support yourself in the manner you have began?——Look upon me, *Jeanetta*, as your Friend, and dissipate all Anxiety on my Account; I once more give you my solemn Promise, you have nothing to fear, and much to hope from the Sentiments you have now inspired me with, and did I not truly interest myself in your behalf, I would not enquire into these Particulars.

After most humbly thanking him for the Goodness he was pleased to express for me, alas! my Lord, said I, with a Sigh, I here must acknowledge the Imprudence of my Conduct; my Reason has often reproached me with it; and it was with great Difficulty Monsieur the Count *de Saint Fal* prevailed on me to accept of the Tokens of the most disinterested Friendship that ever was——some Time ago, I was determined to pass my Days in a Convent, and more than once press'd him to assist my Intentions; but his Persuasions have detained me hitherto. You always talk of my Nephew, interrupted the Marquis, whom you do not love, yet never mention my Son in the Provision made for you. Yet its more reasonable to attribute your little Revenue to him than the Count *de Saint Fal*.

My Lord, answered I, Heaven prosper me as I speak with Sincerity, I will not absolutely say the Marquis has had no share in what has been done for me; but this I affirm, that whatever I have received hitherto has been from your Nephew's Hands, as so much lent to me, and to be repaid by me, if ever Fortune should put it in my Power——a Train of Events continually alarming me made me accept his Generosity, and prevented my coming to any Determination how to dispose of myself.

Say no more, beautiful *Jeanetta*, replied the Marquis, I pretend not to call your Conduct in Question, I am convinced, more than you can be sensible of, that it has been without Reproach; and assure you I am so far from desiring you should be shut up in a Monastery, that I would be the first to oppose it——excuse therefore the Questions I have put to you, an exact Examination into

your Affairs, was highly necessary for me, in order to perfect the great Designs I have for your Advantage—you have answered me in the manner I wished, and expected from the Idea I had conceived of your Honour and Veracity—I was inspired with an Esteem for you the first Moment I beheld you, nor is it at all lessen'd since the Discovery who you were—Unknowing you, I hated you; but knowing you, am become an Admirer of your Virtue—rank me therefore among the Number of your Friends, or rather believe me the Chief of them—you will find me so in the End—wait therefore with Patience the result—I leave you at present, but in two Days you shall hear from me, and as I come often to *Paris*, and sometimes pass whole Weeks here, will be a constant Visitor.

With these Words he rose from his Chair, and having pass'd some Compliments on my Shape and Air, and told me that he intended to invite me to Dinner some Day to have the Pleasure of hearing me sing again, he took his leave, and left me in an Astonishment impossible to be expressed.

What indeed could I think of this Adventure! to find a Man who had expressed himself with so much Bitterness against me, and seem'd impatient for my Ruin, changed at once into my Friend, anxious for my Good, and satisfied with every Thing I did, an Alteration I say, so sudden, so undreamt of might well appear a Mystery—was I not the same *Jeanetta* for whose sake his Son has twice endangered his Life, and who has cost him so much Trouble, what had I done to merit, that the Detestation he so lately had for me, should be converted into so great a liking?—I was sometimes tempted to imagine the little Beauty I was Mistress of had made him entertain Sentiments for me, which would have been no less a Misfortune than his Indignation had been; but then, when I reflected on the Praises he had bestowed upon my Virtue and good Conduct, I could not think he had any aim to destroy what he seem'd so much to value me for.

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This last Consideration gave me some Peace, and I was resolved to wait the Event of those great things he had made me hope, and should it even prove that he had any dishonourable Intentions toward me, to trust in Heaven's Protection which had never yet abandoned me.

My Thoughts being a little more settled, I sat down to answer Monsieur *De Saint Fal's* Letter, but before I began, hearing some Voices on the Stairs, the Sound of which very much surprized me, I rose hastily, and looking through the Key-hole, immediately saw my Father and Mother embracing my Aunt——had I followed the first Dictates of my natural Affection, I should have ran and thrown myself into their Arms, but the remembrance how improper such a Discovery would be at this Time, checked that Impulse, and I drew back and threw myself on a Settee, to consider within myself what was best for me to do.

Neither my Love nor Duty would have suffered me to let them depart without seeing them, and as Time had made a very great Alteration in me, not only as to my Stature, but my Features also, which joined to the vast Difference in my Dress and Behaviour, made me pretty positive they would not know me, and in this Assurance rang my Bell for *Barbara*. She came in looking a little perplexed, and I asking her the Occasion of it, she told me that she hoped I would not be offended, for that having wrote to her Brother and Sister the Happiness she enjoyed in my Service, they were now come to visit her, some Business having brought them to *Paris*. No, no, answered I, so far from being offended, that I am glad you like your Place, and will make your Relations welcome: pray tell them they must dine with me. O, Madam! cried she, your Ladyship is too good——such an Honour is not for such poor People as they are. I will have it so, resumed I, therefore let me have their Company while you are getting Dinner ready——I assure you I long to see them. My poor Aunt went out of the Room quite transported at the favour I shewed to her, and obeyed my Commands.

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My Heart was in a violent, tho' not unpleasing Agitation, at the Sight of those who gave me Being; but I suffered a great deal from the Homage they paid me, and did all I could to put an end to it.

At last, by telling them I was an enemy to all kind of Ceremony, and that if they meant to oblige me it must be by treating me in a familiar Manner, I prevailed with them to sit down—the prejudice of my supposed Superiority made them however very fearful of speaking, and I should never have got out of them what I wanted to be informed of, if I had not luckily put them on talking of the Village where they lived; I told them I had past through it some time ago in a visit I made at the Castle, where I had stayed several Months: My Mother on hearing this appeared like a Person who was endeavouring to call something to Mind, and looking earnestly on me, said, that ever since she came into the Room, she imagined she had seen me somewhere, but could not recollect; but on my mentioning the Castle, she no longer doubted but that it had been with Madam the Countess *de N*——my Father said the same thing, and added, that things had been strangely changed since the Count's Death. I then asked him what was become of the Countess, to which he replied, that she lived with her Daughter *Mademoiselle de Elbieux*, now *Madam de Esival*. O Heaven! cried I, is she married, and as ill-humoured as ever? Yes, Madam, said he, I find your Ladyship knows her——sure never was a worse Woman in the World——she has quarrelled twice with her Husband, and enough to do there was to make it up again between them; but the third Time she carried Things to such a height, that he was obliged to part from her; but unfortunately for him he had put so much in her Power, that this Separation has left him in very ill Circumstances, but he chose rather to suffer any thing than live with her. To this, my Father added, that she lived not above three Miles from *Paris*, where she always passed the Winter Season, and that every body, even her own Servants, held her in Detestation.

The many Misfortunes this Woman's Cruelty had brought on me, made me curious to know the Particulars of her History, and I cannot boast of so forgiving a Nature, as not to be pleas'd with hearing those who injure me without a Cause, have in their turn also something to complain of——I am sensible of this Fault, and lay it as a Penance on myself, to confess it in this publick Manner.

I had no sooner testified my Desire of hearing in what Manner Madam *D'Estival* had behaved, and the Circumstances that attended her Marriage, than my Father readily obliged me with the Detail, which tho' given in his rustic Way, was perfectly intelligible to me ; but I shall present my Reader with it in my own Words.



*The History of Mademoiselle D'ELBIEUX,
and Monsieur D'ESTIVAL.*

AS long as Monsieur the Count *de N*—— lived, Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* his Daughter kept herself within tolerable Bounds, fearing his Severity, as having experienced it, on the first Discovery she made of her perverse Inclinations. But he was no sooner laid in Earth, then she gave a loose to all that the Badness of her Heart suggested——Her Quality, her Youth, the Reputation of her Wit, but above all the vast Fortune she was then in Possession off, attracted a great Number of Admirers. She had Vanity enough to pride herself in the Crowd who daily made their Court, but her greatest Pleasure was in creating Quarrels among them : No less than ten Duels were fought on her Account. She received all the Addresses made to her with so much seeming Sweetness, that every one imagined himself the happy Man ; but she no sooner found she had engaged the Heart, than she began to change the Encouragement she had given into Disdain,

Disdain, and acted with so much Insolence and Tyranny, that at length she saw herself abandoned by all but one. This unfortunate Gentleman, who truly loved her, and had besides great Interest in the Match, still persevered, and she continued to treat him with a shew of Affection, much longer than she had done any of his Rivals.

This Gentleman had an Estate within twelve Miles of the Castle, belonging to the Countess *De N——*, and this near Neighbourhood gave him an Opportunity of visiting there very often——He was tall, handsome, well made, and had an Air of Grandeur, which was very engaging——Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* was highly pleased with having a Lover, for whom she knew several of her Acquaintance sigh'd in vain: But I cannot think a Soul like hers capable of being influenced by that tender Passion; she might perhaps *Like*, but not *Love*, and the Event has shewn I am not deceived. She left no Arts untryed to secure him, but as soon as he was so, resign'd herself entirely to Caprice and Ill-humour; always restless and mischevious, she took a Pride in perplexing and rendring him uneasy, and found the means of doing it, in as ample a Manner, as her Propensity to it made her wish.

The Countess her Mother, as I observed in the beginning of these Memoirs, was naturally gay, and tho' pretty much advanced in Years, was very well pleased to be told she was handsome: Monsieur *D'Estival*, for so her Daughter's Lover was called, easily perceived this Foible in her, and did not fail to humour it, as he thought her Interest would be very essential towards hastening the Match, which for many Reasons he was ambitious of, and which as the young Lady now behaved, he began to be in doubt of.

The Countess was highly delighted with the fine things he said to her, and the more so, as he was now the only Person who entertained her in that Manner. Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*, who was no Stranger to her Mother's amorous Inclinations, took a wicked Pleasure in heightning them in Favour of Monsieur *D'Estival*, by continually

ally telling her of the Encomiums he made on her Wit and Beauty——He makes his Addresses indeed to me, cried the artful Creature, but I can see very well that if he durst to lift his Hopes to your Ladyship, he would much rather have me for a Daughter, than a Wife.

The Countess's Vanity, flattering her into a Belief that it might really be as her Daughter said, and approving of Monsieur *D'Estival's* Person, from that Moment began to treat him with an extraordinary Respect, mixed with some Share of Tenderness; while on the other Hand Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* grew also still more kind to him, and pretending that her Mother's Consent was absolutely necessary for their Marriage, told him that the only Way to gain it was to feign a Passion for her. You are very certain, said she, of not being taken at your Word, even tho' you should carry it so far as to offer Marriage, but tho' past all soft Desires, she has still a Stock of Pride, that will not suffer her to have any Friendship for a Man, who she thinks prefers any Woman, even her own Daughter, to herself. This I assure you has been the true Reason of my continuing 'till now unmarried——I have been obliged to reject all the Offers have been made me, because not one of those who have done me the honour to address me, have found out my Mother's Foible, which if I betray to you, you ought to look upon it as a Proof of my peculiar Regard, since I have never done it to any before.

D'Estival believing all she said on this score, was so transported at this Testimony of her Condescension in his Favour, that he threw himself at her Feet, acknowledging the Honour she did him, with the most sincere Affection: and in Obedience to her Commands, redoubled his Assiduities to the Countess, in such a Manner, that every body imagined him her Lover. She, who was easily deceived on that Article, now plumed herself in the belief her Charms had lost nothing of their former Force, since they had captivated the Heart of a young Gentleman, who came at first to her House, with a view of addressing her Daughter, and could not be ungrateful for the DefERENCE he paid her.

To like the Love, is a great Step towards liking the Lover, her Heart grew compassionate to the Pains she supposed herself to have created in his, and at last she confess'd to him, that he was not indifferent to her. Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* by her Mother's Pensiveness guess'd what Sentiments she was possess'd of, and pleas'd herself with the Perplexity in which she should now involve both her Mother and Lover. Never had she any real Satisfaction but in giving disquiet to others, and as she did not want Wit was seldom at a loss for Opportunities, to indulge this wicked Impulse of a perverse and vitiated Disposition.

She now began to receive Monsieur *D'Estival* with Coldness, and on his complaining in a tender Manner of this change in her Behaviour, with Scorn, and Insolence. As he little imagined the Occasion, having done nothing but what her own Commands obliged him to, Jealousy took Possession of his Heart, and made him recollect that of late his Mistress had treated with Civility a certain Gentleman, who lived also in the Neighbourhood, called Monsieur *Desfourneaux*, a vain, gay, fluttering Coxcomb, vers'd in little else than the Art of Defamation, and in that excell'd sufficiently, to make his Company acceptable sometimes to a Woman of Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux's* Humour.

Such as he was, however, the Reception he met with at the Castle, gave Monsieur *D'Estival* an infinity of Pain ; he observed every Motion of his supposed Rival, and the Passion he was now inflamed with, having this peculiar Quality of representing every thing its own Way, the more Pains he took to be assured made him the less so, and as he truly loved the Lady, exclusive of her Fortune, he suffered all that can be imagined in such a Circumstance. Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* presently discovered his Disquiet, and the Motive ; she gloried in it, and to encrease her Triumph over this unhappy and too constant Lover, carried her Complaisance to *Desfourneaux* even to a seeming Fondness.

The Countess *De N——* was in a quite different Situation ; she had given Encouragement to the pretended Addresses of Monsieur *D'Estival*, but finding them cease

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on a sudden, and her supposed Loyer grown extremely melancholy, she took an Opportunity when they were alone together, to ask the meaning of so strange an Alteration in his Behaviour ; on which, Madam, said he, I should little deserve to have the Passion I profess be believed sincere, if I could without the utmost Anxiety behold the favourable Reception of a Rival. O Heavens! cried the Countess, what is it you mean? whom do you see entertained here that can give you any Uneasiness. Ah, Madam! replied he, too well your Ladyship is acquainted with the Causes of my Despair——why will you therefore cruelly compel me to mention a Name so hateful to me——But, O good Heaven, continued he in the utmost Agony, in what does *Desfournaux* merit the Encouragment he is blest with.

Desfournaux, said she interrupting him hastily, is it possible the Visits of that Trifler can give you Pain? but to convince you of your Error, I will send to forbid him ever coming here any more——and be assured, that to render you easy and contented, would do the same by those infinitely more worthy of my Esteem.

Monsieur *D'Esival* thought himself so much obliged by this Promise, that he threw himself at the Countess's Feet, and kiss'd her Hands, with an Eagerness which might well be taken for the Effects of Love, as indeed it was, tho' not for the Object in presence. Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* came that Moment into the Room, and surprized her Lover in that Posture, and imagining she was herself the Dupe of her own Plot, and that by counterfeiting an Affection for her Mother, he had work'd himself up into a real Passion for her, was stung to the very Soul, and she flew out of the Room, muttering something which was not very pleasing to the Countess, who rose hastily from her Seat, in Order to follow her, and give her some Tokens of her Resentment——Monsieur *D'Esival* perceiving the Fury she was in, kept her from going out of the Room, and in endeavouring as he thought to appease her, let fall some Words, which let her into the Secret of his Behaviour, and that she had been but the Property of his Designs on her Daughter. This Disco-

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very put her into a very great Confusion, and she sat down again without being able to speak. *D'Estival* asked very respectfully if he had been so unhappy as to have done any thing to offend her. No, Monsieur, answered she, but I have something in my Bosom which I cannot be easy 'till I disburden myself of——tell me, therefore, continued she, if you have dealt sincerely with me, and if you have not, let me no longer be a Stranger to the Motive which engag'd you to deceive me——in fine, am I to depend on the Professions you have so often made me of Love, or am I not.

What a Perplexity was now this poor Gentleman in, he had been made to believe that nothing would engage the Countess to favour his Addresses to her Daughter, but imagining he gave the Preference to herself; to confess the Truth therefore, he thought would ruin all he had so long been endeavouring to bring about, and how to persevere in his pretended Passion he knew not, for fear, as there was but too much Probability, she should take him at his Word: Madam, answered he after a pretty long Pause, I can see no cause for your Ladyship's harbouring any doubt of my Sincerity. The Countess *De N—*ought to know herself too well, to doubt if any Charms can come in Competition with those she is Mistress of.

Well, replied she, I am willing to believe your Passion represents me such as you say; and confess to you in my turn, that I look upon no Man in the World so worthy as Monsieur *D'Estival*; but yet we ought not to enter into Engagements, which we should hereafter have Reason to repent——we are both of us past five and twenty, and should well weigh the Consequences of things of this Nature——to be plain with you, Monsieur, I have a very great Affection for my Daughter, and will never consent to marry to her Prejudice; so as I would make her happy, and you also, I offer you your Choice, either to take me with only my bare Dowry, or her with the vast Estate, which by the Death of her Father, and the Retirement of her Brother, is now devolved on her; for I have always promised her, and will not break my Word, that whenever I marry, she shall be immediately put in possession

possession of all the Wealth I am posselt of——if your Passion still continues, to give me the Preference even under these Disadvantages, you have nothing to do, but publish the *Banns* of Matrimony ; if the Riches of my Daughter outbalances your regard for me, then prepare for your Nuptials with her : I leave you to reflect on what I have said, and expect your decisive Answer to-morrow about this Time.

With these Words she went out of the Room, leaving Monsieur *D'Esival* in a Consternation that is not easy to be express'd ; he was so posselt with what Mademoiselle had told him, concerning her Mother's Caprice, that he was sometimes ready to believe she offered herself to him in this Manner only to try him, and that if he feigned to fix his Choice on her, with the Disadvantages she mentioned, that she would then give her Daughter to him, contenting herself with the Vanity of having it to say she had refus'd him. The Affair however seem'd so nice, and so much depended on the Answer he was to give, that it involved him in a most terrible Dilemma, and he went out of the Castle, ruminating on the Adventure, and full of disturb'd Emotions.

Madamoiselle *D'Elbieux* hapened to be at her Chamber Window, and saw his Coach drive through the Court-Yard ; as he had not us'd to quit the Castle without taking leave of her, she imagined it the Consequence of what she had seen, and grew more confirm'd than before, that her Mother had supplanted her in his Affection——'till now she knew not that she loved him, but no sooner did she imagine he was devoted to her Mother, than she thought herself the most unhappy Creature in the World, in the loss of her Lover, who now appeared so amiable in her Eyes. Hurry'd with all the Impatience of Love, Jealousy, Despair and Revenge, she resolv'd to omit nothing that might gratify each of those outrageous Passions, tho she should trample under Foot all the Rules of Duty, and of Decency.

Even her darling Pride was now no more remembered——*D'Esival* must be regain'd, and her Mother mortified, whatever should be the Event ; she than sat herself down

and wrote a little Billet to him, in which she told him, that intending to go very early the next Morning before the Countess was stirring, to visit a Relation at a Monastery about a League distant, she desired he would meet her in the Road, having something to impart to him, that it was absolutely necessary he should know, and which she added, she believed would not be disagreeable to him to hear.

This she entrusted to the Care of a Farmer's Son who was frequently about the Castle, charging him to be secret, and bring her an immediate Answer ; to engage his Fidelity she gave him a handsome Reward, and promised him yet more at his Return. The young Fellow, for all his Simplicity, was sensible of the Consequence of what he was about to do, and dreading the Countess's Displeasure if it should ever be discovered, that he had a Hand in carrying on such an Affair without her Knowledge, thought it was best to go upon sure Grounds, and resolved to shew her the Letter.

Accordingly he did so, assuring her Ladyship, that though her Daughter should resent it never so much, he would hazard every thing rather than disoblige her.

The Countess highly prais'd his Honesty, gave him a handsome Gratitude, and promised that Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* should never have any Reason to suspect he had betrayed her Secret. On opening the Letter, she was amazed at the Appointment she found it contain'd, and in order to penetrate into the Motive of it, she determin'd to write another, and send it instead of her Daughter's. She made use of the same Words, only changed the Time and Place, appointing an Ally in her own Park, which had a Door that opened into the Garden, and the Hour 12 at Night, instead of early in the Morning.

When this was ready she sent it by the young Peasant, and order'd him to bring to her whatever Answer Monsieur *D'Estival* should send ; after he was gone, she began to consider in what manner she should behave, in an Affair in which she had a double Concern.—She doubted not but it was owing to the Posture, in which
her

her Daughter had found *D'Estival*, that she wrote to desire this private Conference; but then if he should comply with her Assignment, as she sometimes feared he would, in what Fashion to resent it seem'd to her very difficult to resolve. But as no Judgment could be form'd till his Answer arriv'd, she was oblig'd to wait the Event.

The Peasant in the mean Time was highly delighted with his own Conduct, not doubting but he should also be paid by the Lover for his Trouble, and went merrily on his Errand; but in the way happening to meet with an Acquaintance, went into a Cabaret, where drinking too plentifully he fell asleep, and awoke not till it was dark. He reproached himself not a little for this Negligence, but thought to make up his loss of Time by his haste, and invent some Excuse to the Ladies for having staid so long.

The Hurry he was now in, occasion'd him to mistake his way, and happened to take that Road, which led to the House of Monsieur *Desfourneaux*, having never been either there or at Monsieur *D'Estival's*, he was only guided by the Directions he had received; and seeing before him a great Court-Yard, which had a row of Elms leading up to it, he imagined himself right, and went directly to the Gate, and enquired of the Servant who open'd it, if his Master was at Home, and being answer'd in the affirmative, sent the Letter into him desiring a speedy Answer.

The Countess, in the hurry of Spirits she had been in, forgot to put a Supercription, which gave it very much the Air of a Mystery to this Gentleman.——The Contents, however, seem'd yet more so: To be wrote to in that familiar Stile, and desired to meet a young Lady of Mademoiselle's Quality and Character, was an Honour he could little expect; and had he not been vain enough to think every thing was due to his Merit, he would from the beginning have imagined there was some Mistake in the Affair.

But, as I said before, Self-Sufficiency kept him from once thinking on any such thing, and he order'd the
Messenger

Messenger to acquaint the Lady who sent him, that he thank'd her for the Honour she did him, and that he would not fail the Time and Place appointed.

It was very late before he return'd, and both the Countess and her Daughter suffer'd not a little from their Impatience; the former to prevent her seeing the Fellow before her, had order'd Mademoiselle *Du Parc* her Woman, to watch for him at the Postern, and this old Waiting-Woman was too diligent, not to conduct him into her Lady's Closet, without Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* seeing him.

The Countess no sooner was told that *D'Estival* would obey the Summons, than she wrote a little Note in his Name to her Daughter, entreating she would give him a Meeting that Night, having consider'd that the Morning would render her more liable to be observed, and then named the Park-Gate. This she order'd the Fellow to give to her Daughter, as from the Gentleman to whom he had been sent.

'Tis easily perceived that the Countess laid this Plot, in order to be near the Place of Meeting, that by the Conversation they should have together, she might discover the real Sentiments of Monsieur *D'Estival*, so went thither somewhat before the Hour prefixed, and stood concealed behind a great Tree, in case the Moon should happen to shine out, and thereby endanger a Discovery.

Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* on the other Hand was extremely punctual, and came accompanied by her Maid, who was in the Secret: They sat down on a Bank near the Gate, and cough'd by way of Signal to *D'Estival*, if it should happen that he were already near the Place: They waited not long before a Rustling among the Trees made them not doubt, but the expected Person was approaching; on which the Confidante of Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* stepp'd forward, and said, Monsieur, speak low, in Case any Wanderers should happen to be in the Park. The supposed *D'Estival* answer'd that he would be wary, and presenting her his Hand, she led him to her Mistress.

The Obscurity of the Night happened to be such, as to render it impossible for any Objects to be discern'd, so they were both oblig'd to content themselves with saying a thousand endearing things, without being able to converse with those true Intelligencers of the Heart, the Eyes. *Desflourneaux* told her how happy he thought himself in this Opportunity of entertaining her, and swore he adored her beyond all things upon Earth: on which she interrupted him, by saying, hold, Monsieur, I will not listen to one Word you tell me on this Score, till you inform me truly on what Terms you are with my Mother;—'tis to be convinced of that from your own Mouth, I appointed this private Meeting, and will never see you more, if you comply not with what I desire.——Therefore, tell me, if you have any real Passion for her, I shall be far from being any Bar to your Designs.

Nothing could be more amazing than this Discourse was, to the Person to whom it was made.——Heavens! Madam, cry'd he, I a Passion for the Countess——can you imagine me stupid enough to doat upon Antiquity——can she have any other Merit in my Eyes, than being the Mother of the finest Creature in the World?——No, no, Madam, her Charms have long since been faded, and if she imagines her Paint, false Curls, and affected Airs have any Influence over me, she but deceives herself——one only Woman I love, and that is your beautiful Self.

Had he been Master of all the Eloquence of the greatest Orator that ever was, he could not so well have pleased *Mademoiselle D'Elbieux*, as he did in these ill-natured Reflections on her Mother: Malice was a Regale peculiarly adapted to her Taste, and so far from interrupting him, that she let him go on with many other, and more gross Epithets if possible, on her who had given her Birth. At last, well, but, said she, all this is not sufficient to satisfy me; for I am credibly inform'd you are under secret Engagements.

These Words struck a Damp on the Gaiety of *Desfourneaux*; when she had mentioned the Countess, he was not at all alarmed at her Suspicions because they had no Foundation, and he knew very well how to clear himself; but this Gentleman had been weak enough to give his Hand to a Woman of mean Birth, and worse Fame, which having immediately repented of, he was obliged to allow her a considerable Share of his little Fortune, in order to prevail with her to keep it a Secret.—— Imagining, therefore, by what Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* last said, that she had made a Discovery of his Marriage, he was extremely at a Loss what to say.

The Lady taking his Silence as an Effect of his Guilt.——I find, said she, that what I accuse you of is but too just, and you are now seeking some plausible Excuse for it;——but all you can say will be in vain, I'll never see you more. She was turning away, when *Desfourneaux* took hold of her Hand, and gently drew her back.——Pardon me, my Angel, cry'd he, that I hesitated one Moment to lay open all my Soul to you.——I feared to mention what, since you are so good to bless me with your Favour, I look on as my great Unhappiness and Shame;——but I will now own to you, that I am, indeed, under a secret Engagement.——I was unwarily drawn in, and am——married——Married! said Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*. Yes, Madam, replied he; but as the Ceremony was not according to the Forms which ought to be observed on such Occasions, I can easily be reliev'd from it.

Wretch! resumed she, hastily interrupting him, hast Thou the Insolence to hope I will ever regard thee after such an Action.——No, no, proclaim your Nuptials——be the Jest of all who know you, and the Object of my eternal Hate.

With these Words she burst hastily from him, and flew toward the Gate, with too much Precipitation for him to have overtaken her, had the Surprise he was in permitted him to attempt it. He now cursed himself for his frank Confession, and quitted the Park with as
much

much Mortification, as he had entered it with Pleasure.

The Countess could not but be heartily dejected, she had heard the Man she loved speak of her in the most contemptible Terms, and her own Daughter seemed delighted with his Bitterness against her; but all the Indignation she conceived at this unworthy Treatment, was short of her Astonishment at his pretending to be married to her; and she returned to the Castle full of Perplexity and Perturbation.

Thus was every one deceived by the Darkeness of the Night, and the Exchange of the Letters. The Countess never once thought it could be any other than *D'Estival*, whom she had heard with her Daughter.——*Desfourneaux* went away, not doubting but he was the Person for whom the Appointment was intended——and Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*, assured that her Mother was married to *D'Estival*, though he now repented of it.——All these Mistakes could not but produce very odd Circumstances; but I must beg my Reader's Patience for a while: Dinner being brought in as my Father was in this Part of the Story, interrupted him from prosecuting it, and after that other Accidents intervened, which prevented my being told the Sequel till a long time afterward.

While we were at Table, I long'd prodigiously to hear what they would say of my Self, and would fain have mentioned that Niece, of whom I had hear *Barbara* talk, but knew not how to do it without appearing too much interested; especially, as I saw both my Father and my Mother, look very much and earnestly on me, as often as they could do it without being rude. But *Barbara* eas'd me of this Inquietude, by asking them, as she was setting on the Dessert, whether they had been able to hear yet what was become of me. Alas! no, Sister, said my Mother with a deep Sigh——we are entirely ignorant where she is at present——some time ago we were told she was in a Monastery; but that on Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* happening to come
H z there,

there, she was taken suddenly away, and I can't find any body that has ever seen her since.

Perceiving the Discourse was like to end here, I revived it, by asking how it was possible a Daughter should neglect acquainting her Parents with the Place of her Abode.——Sure, added I, you must have used her very unkindly, or she could not be guilty of so much Disobedience. No, Madam, cry'd my Father, far from it——on the contrary, she was used with too much Fondness, and that has been her Ruin——She was always suffer'd to have her own Will, and to that we owe all the Vexation she has brought upon us——where she is, or how she spends her Time nobody knows ; but she'll one Day answer for all the Tears she has cost her poor Mother——for my Part I am come to a Resolution never to trouble myself any more about her ; but e'en abandon her to her unhappy Fate.

Good Husband, don't talk so, reply'd my Mother, wiping away the Tears, that in spite of her trickled down her Cheeks, I hope she will see the Error of her Ways one Day :——Besides, we don't know the Truth of Things——she may not be so wicked as People say.——I am sure her Inclinations were virtuous, and if she does not write to us, it may be because she is in some Place where she is not permitted, or has no Conveniency——we ought to condemn no-body without hearing them, much less our own Child. You are much in the right, Sister, said my poor good-natured Aunt, the Girl may make a good Woman yet, for all the Stories told of her.——One does not know what may have happened, and should always judge the best.

I like you, said I, for taking your Niece's Part, there is no judging by Appearances, and if it should one Day be proved that she is wrong'd, it would inflict a lasting Remorse on those, who have censured her Actions, without knowing the Motive of them.

Your Ladyship is excellently good, cry'd my Mother, to have so favourable an Opinion of my poor *Jeanetta* : I
do

do assure you, Madam, she would not have spoke in the manner those do, who accuse her, if they had been guilty of worse things than can be laid to her Charge. My dear Mother melted into Tears as she utter'd these Words, and my Eyes that Instant meeting hers, Nature exerted itself, and excited a Sympathy in my Heart, which, unable to restrain shewing some Tokens of, I made a Pretence of going into my Closet, and staid there till I had recover'd myself.

I could hear my Father chide her, for giving such a loose to her Tenderness before a Lady of my Quality, and she excus'd herself by saying, she fancied there was such a Resemblance between me and her poor *Jeanetta*, that it was impossible for her to forbear. My Father own'd he was of the same Opinion, and if he durst would have mention'd it before.

After this they began to ask my Aunt who I was, and in what manner I lived: she told them that I was of very high Birth to be sure, for at Court where she had been with me, nothing but People of Quality, all my Relations she believ'd, came to visit me; and as to my Behaviour I was a perfect Nun, and so good humour'd and so generous, that she did not think my equal was to be found in the whole World. My Parents congratulated her good Fortune; and then began to inform her, how very far from being happy they were, being scarce able to subsist, several of their Sheep having been devour'd by the Wolves, and two Cows, which were their main Support, stolen from them. This pierced me to the Heart, and made me presently set about contriving how I might relieve their Necessities, without discovering myself, or giving any room for Suspicion.

After having consider'd on the Matter some little time, I return'd to them, and took an Occasion of telling them I was very fond of the Country, and as soon as I had finish'd some little Affairs, intended to pass a few Weeks in some pleasant retired Part. Ah, Madam, cry'd *Barbara*, your Ladyship cannot find a sweeter

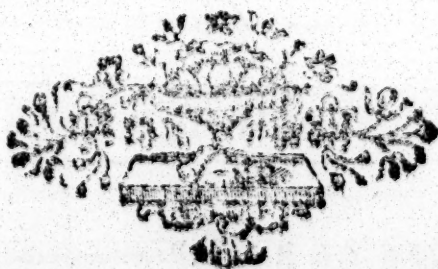
Place in all *France*, than the Village of *D*——in *Fountainbleau*——there is not a better Air, nor a finer Prospect any where.——Your Ladyship eats nothing here ; but if you would once go there, I'd venture my Life you'd have a good Appetite.

Well, said I, 'tis very likely I may make tryal of it : I am ordered to drink Milk for the Recovery of my Health, and if your Brother and Sister will be so good to comply with what I desire, I will think on no other Place but their Village.——Be so good, cry'd my Aunt, quite transported ! Ah, Madam, I'll answer for them, you need only let them know your Commands.——Both my Parents seconded what she said, and added, they should think themselves highly honour'd to serve me.

I am much oblig'd to you, answer'd I ; in the first Place, I will lodge at your House ; but I must desire you will buy me two young Cows that the Milk may be better. I will also give you Money to furnish a Chamber for me, and as I am fond of Country Amusements, you must purchase a little Flock of Sheep. It was pleasant enough to observe the Countenances my Father, Mother, and Aunt put on when they heard me speak in this manner ;——but I gave them not time to reply, for plucking my Purse out of my Pocket, I counted out seventy-five *Lewis D'Ors* upon the Table : And when they had seen the Sum, I gathered it up together, and wrapp'd it in a Piece of Paper, then put it into my Mother's Hand ; I depend on you, said I, good Mademoiselle *B*——to get the Cows, the Sheep, and the Chamber against I come. The Confusion I was in was so great, at being obliged to receive all the Acknowledgments their Gratitude poured out ; my Father, and Aunt especially, being ready to fall down and kiss my Feet, that to put an End to it, I pretended to have Affairs of the utmost Moment to dispatch, and taking my leave of them, retired to my Closet ; where I indulged that Satisfaction, which always attends conferring

ferring Benefits, and being happy enough to give Happiness to others ; and though I had done no more than what my Duty bound me to do, yet did the Consciousness of having acquitted myself of that Duty, give me an Infinity of Pleasure.

The End of the NINTH PART.





THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR,
VIRGIN'S VICTORY.

PART. X.

AFTE R my Parents were gone, and I had recovered myself from the Emotions their Presence gave me, I wrote an Answer to Monsieur the Count *de Saint Fal's* Letter. I thought proper to acquaint him with the Epistle I had received from the old Marquis *de L———V———*, his Discovery of me, and the Visit he had made me ; with all that passed in that Conversation ; concealing no Part of the Truth, and entreating he would use me with the same Sincerity, and also continue to favour me with his Advice, how to behave in so critical a Circumstance.

When I had sent this Letter away, I divided my Time between Acts of Devotion for the safety of my dear

dear Marquis, and in reading Books of Philosophy and Morality to inspire me with Fortitude, to sustain whatever Ills might still be ordained for me. As the Time in which I expected the Father of my Lover drew near, I began to be no less impatient to see him than I had been fearful before——the great Designs he said he had form'd for me, elevated me to Hopes I had little reason to expect would ever be fulfilled, and tho' I endeavoured to check Ideas, which then seemed so vain, yet would they still return, and in spite of myself I was compelled sometimes to look on myself then, as what I now in reality am.

It was the third Day from that in which I had seen him, and I begun to doubt if he would keep his Promise. when about six in the Evening, I heard him on the Stairs, enquiring after my Health of *Barbara*, in a very polite Manner; when he entered my Apartment, it was with the same Complaisance, as to a Dutches, tho' bended with the Freedom and Sweetness of a long Acquaintance and intimate Friend——this is true good Breeding, for one cannot call a Man a fine Gentleman, if a due Respect, is not accompanied with a certain Ease, which lays no Restraint on the Person to whom it is paid.

One of the first things he said to me was this,—— charming *Jeanetta*, you have never been out of my Thoughts since I was here; and among other things, it has been some matter of Astonishment to me, that you do not seem tired with this solitary Life——Women at your Age are usually fond of Company and Diversions, whereas you partake of none, and live in the World, as tho' you were out of it——I question if the Life of a Recluse, which you so much dreaded, is not to be preferred to yours.

Constraint, my Lord, answered I, renders those things irksome which in themselves are not so——as I am now at Liberty, I prefer Solitude, but condemned to it, should think it dreadful——but, continued I, I find ways to divert all my time, and between Reading, Working, and Musick, have seldom any vacant Hours.

You are never to be sufficiently praised for being thus every Thing to yourself, replied the Marquis, nor is it at all to be wondered at, that you inspire such lasting Affection in those who truly know you.

He looked at me as he spoke these Words, with an infinity of Tenderness, and perceiving I did not immediately reply, you know not, continued he, the whole Force of your Charms, nor the Conquest they have gained over a Heart, which very lately imagined itself incapable of being influenced in the manner it now is.

————— There is a Person in the World *Jeanetta*, who tho' far advanced in Years has a very great Affection for you————— he is a Man of Quality, and has Honour and good Sense————— he has entrusted me with the Secret, and I have promised to be his Advocate————— what say you, lovely *Jeanetta*, will the greatest Complaisance and Tenderness (both which I will undertake to answer for) make up for want of Youth? ————— I must own, that considering your fine way of Thinking, I cannot suppose he would run any Risque in declaring himself immediately, but I could not persuade him to discover to you his Name, till he was assured his Passion would not be rejected.

Any one may guess the Surprize I was in at hearing the Father of my Lover talk to me in this Manner; and thence infer how difficult it was for me to reply————— as I was wholly unprepared for any such Attack I thought it best to evade it by treating what he said, as a peice of Raillery: I therefore affected to be very gay, tho' in reality I was very much the contrary; the Lover he mentioned had so great a resemblance of himself, that I secretly trembled, for the Consequence of what my unlucky Beauty might occasion; his Love appearing, with Reason, no less a Misfortune to me, than his Hate had been.

The Marquis perceived the little Artifice I now put in Practice, you have a great deal of Wit, said he, it must be confessed————— I see you would turn a Proposal you don't relish into a Jest; yet nevertheless I assure you nothing is more serious————— I will however say no
more

more of it at present——perhaps, hereafter a more favourable Time may offer——a Lover of Sixty must have Patience.

After this, the Conversation turned on a different Subject; the old Marquis told me he had been soliciting in my behalf at Court, that he had reminded the King of what his Majesty had done for me before, and represented my Merit, and the Gratitude I expressed for that Bounty in so strong a Light, that he did not doubt but a good Effect would come of it. The King, said he, being told I am your Godfather, and that I espouse your Interest, will I believe allow you a Pension, and I flatter myself, such a one, as will support you without being obliged either to my Son or Nephew.

This Service was indeed very acceptable to me, and without reflecting as I might have naturally done, whether this was not a generous Artifice in the Marquis, to confer this Favour on me, without letting me know how far I was obliged, I thanked him with the utmost Humility and Sincerity, for interesting himself so far in my Behalf. The Affair is not yet concluded, said he, the better to conceal from me what Part he had in it; but I don't doubt but to wish you Joy of it the next Time I see you.——I shall be extremely glad not to be disappointed in my Hope, for I solemnly protest I have nothing more at Heart, than to see you perfectly easy.

I returned this Compliment as became me, and whatever passed in my Bosom, behaved with a Chearfulness which was very engaging to my Guest; he asked Permission to stay to Supper with me, and as it was a Favour I did not dare to refuse, granted it, as tho' satisfied with the Honour he did me——he said many fine Things to me, on my acquitting myself so well in the little Forms observed at Table between Persons of Distinction, and often cried out in a kind of Transport; good God! who would believe this admirable Creature was born in a Cottage.

When it grew towards Eleven a Clock, he took his leave, saying, he never would exact any thing from me

that trespassed on Decency; that tho' he could never think the Hours tedious in my Company, yet for my sake he judged it Time to retire, which he did with the greatest Complaisance, and a Promise of seeing me the next Day.

He failed not in his Word, and during eight Days, that he stayed at *Paris*, was never absent in an Afternoon. No Respect could exceed that with which he treated me; but every Time he came, dropt one Expression or another, which made me fear the few Charms I was Mistress of had made but too much Impression on his Heart.

The Day of his Departure he told me he was obliged to leave me, and as it would be impossible for him to return in less than a Fortnight, protested he never undertook any Journey with more regret. I tear myself from you, said he, and in this short Time, that I have been accustomed to your Company, am convinced I can't be happy without being eternally with you——if you at present, continued he, comprehend not the meaning of these Words, and many other others I have said, hereafter they will be sufficiently explained.

Alas! thought I. they are but too easily accounted for——I dissembled however my Disquiet till he was gone, and then fell into most terrible Agitations, to think of the Event of so unexpected an Accident——Now, said I, all my ill Fortune is compleated——were the Marquis to return repentant of the rash Judgment jealous Rage has made him pass upon me, will he presume to Rival his Father?——and will the Father recede to the Son——will he, who would not consent to his Union with me, when he not loved me, ever be prevailed upon to yield that he should marry the Woman he unhappily has a Passion for himself?—

These Reflections, which after what had passed between me and the old Marquis were highly reasonable, joined to the Uncertainty I was in for the Fate of his Son, made my Breast a perfect Chaos of Confusion——I slept little that Night, and rose next Morning, not much more composed, when as I was looking for something in a
Drawer

Drawer in my Toylet, I discovered a little Packet, which not having seen before, I hastily opened, and found it contained a Purse, such as Counters are ordinarily put into, but by the Weight I judged it to be Gold; nor was I deceived in my Conjecture——there were in it Two thousand Livres; and a Letter as follows:

To the charming JEANETTA,

TH E King has granted you Two Thousand Livres, by my Hands; and has settled on you one Thousand more, to be constantly paid you by the Year.——For so good an Oeconomist as I know you are, this little Revenue I flatter myself will suffice——I chose this way of delivering you the Money, because I would avoid any Acknowledgments your Excess of Complaisance and Gratitude might have drawn from you——and desire that when I next have the Pleasure of seeing you, you will mention nothing of it——You are under no manner of Obligation to me, as your God-father, it is my Duty to espouse your Interest, and I but spoke, and my Request was granted.——if hereafter I shall be fortunate enough to do any thing that may deserve your Friendship, I shall not in that so easily give up my Pretensions——Be assured there is nothing I more ardently desire, nor will go greater lengths to obtain——I have well weigh'd your Merits, and it is to them, much more than to your Beauty, admirable as it is, that you are indebted for all can be done for you by him, who is,

*With the most perfect Honour
and tenderest Affection,*

The lovely JEANETTA's

Admirer and Friend,

De L——V——.

So great an Act of Generosity, and the Manner of doing it, both surprized and charmed me, for I had then a firm Belief, which has been since confirmed, that it was from the sincere Friendship of this truly valuable Nobleman,

man, not the Bounty of the King that I received this Favour ; which indeed came very seasonably ; my little Stock of Money being very near exhausted by the Assistance I had given my Parents, I must without this Relief have soon been driven to very great Straits. Afflicted as I was on many Accounts, this gave me great Consolation—People may say what they will, but Money is a vast Alleviator of Misfortunes.——I from my Heart admired and acknowledged the Goodness of Providence—Divine Service approaching I went to Church, and joined in it with a greater Fervency than I had ever done before, even at the Time when I was in that dreadful Pit mentioned in the Beginning of these Memoirs, and in Expectation of being every Moment devoured by a Beast of Prey. The Poor were amply remembered by me, and I gave Money to the *Sacristan* to have Prayers offered up for the Preservation of the Marquis and the Count, from all the Dangers to which they were exposed. I was taught from my Youth to have a Confidence in such Acts of Piety, and have experienced in many Instances that they are never thrown away, and tho' those who have little Charity themselves, are apt to say what is given that way, is in Danger of being misapplied, I look on this only as the excuse of a narrow Soul, since it is the good Intention that renders the Gift acceptable to Heaven——the Guilt of the Perversion lies alone on the Person's Head, who is entrusted with the Distribution, but the Merit in the *Donor* is the same, and never misses its Reward. And this I may venture to affirm, that if I have not always received an immediate Relief from the Misfortunes I laboured under, yet my Prayers have been efficacious in obtaining a Fortitude and Resignation to support them without those Murmurs and Repinings, which are the certain Tokens of an abject Mind.

Great indeed were the Trials I sustained, and such as nothing but a due Consideration from what Hand they came, could have given me a share of Patience requisite to preserve me from Despair. That very Morning at my return from Church I found a Person whom I had ordered to bring me the *Gazette*, waiting for me,

——I looked earnestly for that Article relating to the Affairs in *Germany*——and found a Passage which too plainly confirmed what the Count *de Saint Fal* had wrote to me concerning the Marquis——the Words were these :

‘ A Detachment, commanded by a young Nobleman, is entirely cut off, having been surrounded by the Enemy, and the Commander with several other Officers of Distinction left for dead in the Field.’

Ah, Heavens! cried I out, the Marquis is no more! wretched——wretched *Jeanetta*——this was all I had Power to speak; overwhelm’d with Grief, my Senses quite forsook me, and I fell motionless into a Chair: I remained it seems two Hours in this Condition; during which my Cloaths were plucked off, and I was put into Bed, without my being in the least sensible of any thing done about me, or shewing any signs of Life.

When I came to myself, I found my Bed encompassed with Persons I had never seen before, and *Barbara* on her Knees weeping bitterly, and wringing her Hands, having given me over for dead; a Priest whom she had sent for in her Fright, asked me how I did; alas! answered I, more sick in Mind than Body: Have Courage then Madam, resumed he, and cast your Cares on God, who in his good Time will relieve you. As he spoke these Words, the Company withdrew, and I casting my Eyes more heedfully upon him than I had done before, remembered I had seen him officiate at the Chapel where I usually went to Prayers, and had taken a particular Notice of him on Account of the extraordinary Devotion, he seemed inspired with above the rest of his Brethren: —I look’d on him in this Juncture as one sent from Heaven for my Consolation, and made no Scruple of acquainting him, that the Condition he found me in, had been occasioned by hearing of the Death of a Person who was very dear to me, and whom I had looked upon as a Man that was to have been one Day my Husband.

The good Ecclesiastick conformed himself to my Weakness, the better to enforce his Doctrine, and shielded me from that Despair, he perceived was ready to

to lay hold on me, by making me sensible how little Regard was to be given to Publick News-Papers, the Accounts of which he assured me were very uncertain; and then exhorted me to submit to the Divine Will, which it was my Duty to do in all Events, and which knew what was best for me, and would order every thing for my Good, if I endeavoured sincerely to resign every Thing entirely to its Disposal; he added, that a too great Attachment to any created Being, brought on nothing but Misery and Vexation, and that it was a Crime to indulge Grief at the Expence of my Health.

His Admonitions failed not of their Effect, I promised him I would use my Efforts to do my Duty, on which he took his Leave, assuring me he would constantly remember me in his Prayers.

Immediately after he was gone, a huge tall Man with a monstrous black Wig, came to my Bedside and offered to take me by the Hand: His Aspect and Manner of approaching me, put me into such a Terror, that I screamed out and snatched my Hand away——I had no Thoughts of a Physician being sent for, and my Head being a little out of Order through the Weakness which my late Fainting had left me in, made me not presently comprehend what business he could have with me; but he soon solved the Riddle, when addressing himself to an old Lady who stood by; these Symptoms, Madam, said he, denote a manifest Delirium,——she must be let Blood this Minute——Run, pursued he, to *Barbara*, and fetch Monsieur *Lancelot* the Surgeon, that he may perform the Operation, while this little Interval of Sense continues. I was so much amazed at being looked upon as mad, that I could not make any Answer to convince him and the rest of the Company, that I was not so. How kind is Providence, said the Lady, to whom he had spoke, if Monsieur *de Pourpre*, had not happened to be at Home when I sent, what might not this pretty young Creature have suffered! During this Lady's Exclamation I recovered my Voice, and looking on this frightful Doctor with Contempt, I stand in no need, said I, neither of a Surgeon, nor yourself;

self; so desire you'll leave my Chamber——A——
Ha——cried he, the Fit is coming again——I
wish Monsieur *Lancelot* were here——she must have
ten Ounces at least taken from each Arm; and twice
that Number from under the right Ear;——then turn-
ing to me, have a good Heart, Madam, said he, I'll
engage we'll set you up again, tho' it must be owned you
are far gone——very far gone indeed.——See, con-
tinued he, to the old Lady, who I perceived had a great
Confidence in him, what a Wildness there is in her
Eyes——Ah, I am never deceived, if I once look
in the Eyes of a Patient——our Physicians, gene-
rally speaking, are very ignorant, they cannot read
Diseases by the Face, and therefore envy me for my
superior Skill——they talk of obliging me to leave
Paris; but they shall repent it if they offer to molest
me in my Practice. I have a whole Volume ready for
the Press, which I'll have printed in *Holland*, and put
them all to Confusion.

The old Lady seemed to approve prodigiously of
what he said; and then asked him, what Remedies he
intended to prescribe for my Cure. None Madam,
answered he, but what are perfectly simple——the
Gentlemen of the Faculty will sometimes keep a Patient
under their Hands, three or four Years; but my Me-
dicines never fail doing the Business in nine Days at
farthest——I'll have her bled twice a Day for three
Days successively——the too great Height of her
Spirits, must be brought down by three Days Fasting,
and the Heat of her Liver cooled by Bathing——
so that for the last three Days, I'll have her set up to the
Chin in cold Water, for at least six Hours together; and
if this, with the help of some few Lenitives and Eme-
ticks, does not remove all her Complaints at the End of
nine Days, I'll be content to forfeit all the Reputation I
have acquired, and be looked upon as ignorant as those
really are, who pretend to call me so.

The murderous Design which I found this Emperick
had formed against me, frightened me to that Degree,
that I cried out: *Barbara*, who was now returned from
going

going to the Surgeon's, came to me, and asked me tenderly what was the matter——O, said I, send that Man away, pointing to Doctor *Pourpre*, the very Sight of him will throw me into Fits. Is Monsieur *Lancelot* coming, cried he, without regarding what I said?——O, here he is, continued he, perceiving him enter: Come, Monsieur, here is your Patient——be speedy in performing the Operation. The Surgeon, without making any reply, presently plucked out his Lancet, and called for warm Water and a Fillet! while these Things were preparing, the terrible Doctor repeated to him the Number of Ounces of Blood he was to take from each Arm, and I making a sign to *Barbara* to draw my Curtains close about me, threw a Gown over my Shoulders, and escaped from the Bed's-Foot into another Room, where I bolted myself in, resolving not to open the Door till the Doctor and Surgeon had left the House.

I could hear the Uproar they made, when they found I was gone——See! cried *Pourpre*, can there be a more evident Proof of Madness, than to fly from Remedies, and such necessary ones as I always prescribe?——you, Madam, continued he, who sent for me, and know my Skill, can be a Witness that this young Lady is mad——you see how she uses me——for my Part, I think in Charity we ought to force open the Door, and bind her till the Operation is perform'd——it will be a meritorious Action to cure her against her Will; and if ever she comes to her Senses, she will thank us for the Violence we are now compelled to offer.

As no body opposed this Advice, and I heard them draw near the Door, I doubted not but they would do as he ordered, so was forced to cry out, and protest if they attempted such an Outrage, I would call for help from the Window, and have them all prosecuted.

The Surgeon, who was a Man of more Reason, and doubtless had not the best Opinion of Monsieur *Pourpre*'s Advice, begged me to moderate my Passion, and assured me he knew too well what he ought to do offer to bleed me without my Consent. I am ready to believe you Monsieur, answered I, but that Doctor has certainly
some

some Intentions of destroying me, and he will oblige you to do it. No, Madam, returned he, I give you my solemn Promise, that I will be the first to oppose it, unless commanded by yourself.——I beg, therefore, pursued he, that you will open the Door, that I may have the Honour of knowing by what Accident this Mistake has happened, and you will find I shall obey no other Orders than your own.

The Lady whom I mentioned was truly good natured, and moved with my Tears, made the same Protestations that I should not be molested, and *Barbara*, frightened lest I should catch Cold, as she knew I was half naked, cried to me, that they should kill her before they should offer to touch me——all this together emboldned me at last to open the Door, the Surgeon and the Lady came in, and the Doctor was pressing in after them; but on my saying he should not enter, they shut the Door against him. Recover yourself, Madam, I beseech you, said Monsieur *Lancelot*, and favour me so far, as to inform me, what has occasioned the Trouble we have given you. On this I related to him all that had passed, and this with so much Calmness, that he shrugged up his Shoulders, saying, it was not the first piece of Folly that *Pourpre* had been guilty of, and that for his Part he was amazed he had been suffered to practise; but added, that he did not want Skill, if he were less self-sufficient and precipitate.

The old Lady, who it seems had been so good to come to my Assistance, when *Barbara* cried out on my fainting away; told me, that imagining my Case was desperate, she had sent for the Doctor, in whom till now she had placed great Confidence, and also for the Clergyman: I gave her my hearty Thanks for both, as she meant well; but told her I should always think myself under an Obligation, for bringing me acquainted with that pious Ecclesiastick from whose excellent Remonstrances I had received great Benefit; but as for the other I desired to see him no more, for I looked upon him to be more mad than he imagined me to be.

This

This whimsical Adventure ended with my ordering a Gratification to the Surgeon and Emprick, who went away well enough satisfied, but created in me such an Aversion to all Physicians and Prescriptions, that I could never since, even on the most pressing Occasions, be persuaded to have recourse to them——'tis true, I am sensible that this is Prejudice, and that all are not Doctor *Pourpre's*, but yet it is what I cannot get over, and so strongly is it rooted in me, that I believe I shall carry it to my Grave.

As soon as I was free from the Company of these Gentlemen, the good old Lady, to whose mistaken Zeal I was indebted for their Presence, told me, she should be very glad of my Acquaintance, that she had conceived a great liking to me for seeing me so constantly at Church, where she went twice every Day, and had observed I offered up my Devotions with greater Fervour than could be expected from a Person of my Years. I answered her in the politest Manner I could, but evaded the Offer she made me, as not suiting with my Humour to see any Company, even tho' they were of my own Sex. Indeed, I had suffered so much by my too readily entring into a Familiarity with Mademoiselle *Jania*, that I had fixed my Resolution to avoid all possible Dangers of that kind, and nothing could persuade me to break it.

After she had taken her leave, I again took up the Paper, which had occasioned all this Bustle, and whether it was owing to what the Clergyman had said to me, or that in the hurry of my first reading it my Apprehensions had magnified the Danger, I know not, but methought it did not now seem so positive as before, and left room for Hope—the Marquis's Name was not inserted, and there might be many Detachments commanded by Men of Quality, and possibly it might be some other who had fallen the Victim of War, not him for whom I was so nearly concerned ; this soothing Reflection, joined to the Fatigue I had undergone, made me fall into a sound Sleep the Moment I went to Bed.

I would fain have perswaded my poor loving Aunt to have gone to her Bed, but all I could say would not prevail on her, she insisted on watching by me, and happy was it for me she did so, I had otherwise died through Fear, if not been murdered, as the Accident I am going to relate will shew.

The Confusion and Trouble I had been in that Day, left Impressions on my Imagination, which was doubtless the Occasion of a very frightful Dream——Methought a Ghost, loaded with Chains appeared before me, looking on me with a very mournful Aspect——I endeavoured to avoid seeing him, but could not, and I beheld in his Arms a Corpse covered with Blood and Wounds, which I immediately knew to be the young Marquis *De L——V——*; behind this ghastly Phantome, many others equally dismal seemed to stalk, with solemn and dejected Pace——among them was the Father of my Lover, who led a Woman in Stature, Shape and Features perfectly resembling myself——she seem'd to move as if by Compulsion, and had something in her Air, more melancholy and forlorn than the rest——The old Marquis knelt down with her at the Feet of the dreadful Phantome I first mentioned; on which the Corpse of my Lover seem'd to revive, his Eyes opened, and the Blood no longer issued from his Wounds——By degrees he came to himself, and quitting their Arms which had held him, he took his Father's Hand, and that of the Woman who was in every thing my other self, and joined them: I was, methought, in strange Emotions at this Sight, but looking again was surpris'd to find the Bridegroom changed into the young Marquis, and the old one entirely disappeared——casting my Eyes a second Time on the Spectre, I perceived he now had in his Arms another Corpse embrued in Blood, as the former had been——this I presently knew to be the Count *de Saint Fal*, his Countenance appeared so mournful and pity-moving, that I was running to give him some Consolation in the excessive Sorrow with which he appeared to be overwhelmed,

whelmed, when on a sudden I was waked by my Curtains being drawn back——I started as People generally do when roused too hastily from their Sleep, and discovered by the Light of a small Taper, which was burning on the Table, a Man arm'd with a Ponyard, which he presented to my Breast, saying at the same Time, you are a dead Woman, if you offer to cry out, or make the least Noise——your Purse, or your Life this Instant must be mine.

O Heaven ! to whom I owe my Preservation in this dreadful remembrance of thy Goodness to me, keep for ever in my Mind an humble and grateful Remembrance of thy Goodness to me ! My Aunt *Barbara*, who as I said before, would needs remain in my Chamber, imagined she heard something breath in a Closet just behind the Chair in which she sat : ——she listened for some Time, and hearing the same Sound again began to suspect the Truth——She then cast about in her Mind how to avert the impending Danger, ——to call out, or do any Thing that might give the concealed Person room to believe he was discovered, she thought would be certain Death, both to herself and me, so hit upon a method, which considering her Simplicity in most other Things, was very much to be wondered at. Instead of seeming afraid of any Thing, she pretended to yawn, and threw herself from one side of the Chair to the other as if sleepy and tired with her Position, and soon after got up and came to my Bed-side and looked at me, and then cried, ay, she's fast——I knew no business I have to sit here——I'll e'en go to my own Bed in the Kitchen——so having pulled the Door softly, as if fearful of waking me, ran down Stairs, and called up a Merchant that lived at the next House, and she knew had several Men belonging to him——they made such expedition that they were all in my Chamber, just as I was preparing to rise and give my Money to the Villain. The Wretch let fall his Ponyard at this unexpected Interruption, and fell at my Feet begging for Mercy——the Merchant and his People presently secured him, and I a little recovered
from

from my Fright, then I knew him to be the Man who brought me the *Gazette*——he confessed his Intention of robbing me, had been owing to my Imprudence in opening a Drawer before him, where lay a great Quantity of Gold, when I went to pay him for the Paper; ——that Sight, he said, had tempted him to this Wickedness, having always till then behaved himself honestly: But, Madam, continued he, Opportunity and extreme Necessity stifled all other Considerations.

Your fainting away, said he, and the Bustle it occasioned in the Family, gave me the Opportunity while every body was busy about you, of hiding myself in that Closet, where I waited in hope your Maid would either fall a-sleep or go out of the Room; the latter happening, though not as I expected it, I proceeded to the Accomplishment of my intended Design, which was, indeed, to murder you in Case you made any Resistance.

Barbara then relating by what a Stratagem she had rendered the Designs of this wicked Creature frustrate, made me admire the Divine Providence, who when he is pleased can inspire the most fearful with Courage, and the most simple with Cunning.——Never was its power more manifest than in the Instrument made Choice of, for my Preservation in so eminent a Danger.

It was doubtless the same Power who inspired me with a Resolution of saving the Life of the Wretch, who had attempted mine——a Moment later had prevented the Effects of my Pity, for one of the Merchant's Men, instead of accompanying his Fellows, had ran to alarm the Watch, as imagining, perhaps, there might be Occasion for more Assistance; but this I was ignorant of, and had prevailed with my Neighbours to let him make his Escape; I was, indeed, so much moved with his Necessities, which he described with Tears, and the most bitter Remorse, for having urged him to so detestable a Crime, that I gave him Two *Lewis D'Ors*, for the Relief of Ten Children, he told me he had upon his Hands; requiring of him to live honestly for the future, and promising him farther Assistance from time to time, in Case he would send his Wife or one of his Children for it, and never let me see him more. O!

O! how heavenly a Satisfaction do they deny themselves, who, having the power to relieve, are insensible of the Miseries of their Fellow-Creatures! the Pleasure that arises from Acts of Mercy and Benevolence, is certainly the most perfect we can enjoy on Earth; and in my Opinion, he who wants a Soul to *give*, is much poorer than he who by Necessity is compell'd to *ask*! But neither Precept or Example is of Force, where an innate Compassion fails to excite,——Every one will act of himself, and the World must be as it will; for my Part I was so overjoy'd that the poor Fellow, vile as he was, had made his Escape, and had something to comfort his distress'd Family, that it more than compensated for the Terror he had put me in.

He was but just gone when the Watch came in, and search'd the House; but finding no-body, return'd laughing among themselves, I do not doubt, at my groundless Apprehensions.——As for the Merchant, I made him a Present of a Gold Snuff-Box, and gratified his Men for the Disturbance I had given them.

When all was over I embraced my dear Aunt *Barbara*, to whom under Heaven I owed my Life; and assured her, I would not leave the World without giving her ample Proofs of the Sense I had of the Obligations I had to her——fain would I on this Occasion have declared to her who I was, but I restrain'd that Testimony of my Gratitude, her Indiscretion might have occasion'd Consequences of such Moment, that I was oblig'd much against my Inclination to be silent on that Head.—I made what Amends I could, however, by treating her with all the Tenderness of a near Relation, though I own'd myself not as such; and she had all the Reason in the World to be satisfied with my Behaviour to her.

When all this Hurry was over I went again to Bed; but had not power to close my Eyes till Day began to break; but then slept so sound, that I knew not when I should have awoke, had not *Barbara* come into my Room, and told me that a Gentleman in a long Black Gown, with two Attendants with him, was come to speak with

me on Business of Importance. As I could not imagine what any Gentleman that profess'd the Law, as I suppos'd this was, could have to say to me, I ask'd her several Questions concerning what they said, and in what manner they enquir'd for me: And she told me that he who seem'd to be the Master, ask'd her, if Madam *De Roches* was at Home, (for by that Name I foolishly enough still continued to be call'd) and on her answering that I was asleep, he told her I must be waked, for he must speak with me, on a Business wherein Life was concern'd.

What she said affording me no Satisfaction, I got up with as much Expedition as I could, and went into my Drawing-Room to receive this extraordinary Visit.—— I found it was a Commissary, who having made a civil Apology for giving me this Disturbance, address'd himself to me in the following Terms.

Last Night, Madam, said he, the Watch brought a Man before me, who they found running through the Street, as if he was making his Escape from some, that he expected were pursuing him; on which they seiz'd him on Suspicion, but it being late I order'd he should be secur'd till this Morning, when being brought to me again, he appear'd so confus'd, and gave such incoherent Answers to the Questions I put to him, that I sent him back to Prison, till he should give a better Account of where he had been, and what had occasion'd that Terror, which made the Watch take Notice of him. A Letter directed to you, Madam, and entrusted to the Turnkey to deliver to you, was intercepted and broke open. He begs your Mercy, and says his Life is in your Hands. I examin'd him upon this, and he pretends that having brought you the Gazette, he staid to Supper with your Servants, and that was the Occasion of his being out so late. This agrees so ill with the Contents of his Letter to you, that I am come to know what it is that he would have stifled, and what he means by saying his Life is in your Hands.—Please, therefore, to permit me to take down your Information, and you may afterwards act as you think proper——

though I beg a perfect Account, because Witnesses will be called, and any Deviation from Truth, might be of ill Consequence: As I heard your Quality demanded this Deference, I came to wait on you myself, instead of sending an inferior Officer.

These Tidings made me more and more admire Divine Justice, which pursues Wickedness even to its inmost Recesses; but was sorry at the same Time that my Compassion was like to prove unavailing. I was very much at a loss how to reply, as the Wretch's Life depended on my Words, and I naturally abhor'd all kind of Lying or Prevarication; at last, it is true, said I, that being just going to Bed, I found the Fellow you mean in my Chamber, at which I was so frightened that I screamed out and rais'd the House; but on Enquiry I heard that after Supper he fell asleep in the Kitchen, and that when he waked in endeavouring to get out, mistook his Way and came into my Room, and that being frightened himself at my taking him for a Thief, he ran away to prevent being seiz'd as such.

The Commissary appear'd satisfied with this, and went away; but I prepar'd the Landlord of the House and his Servants, that they might agree in the same Story, in Case farther Enquiry should be made, as, indeed, there was; but nothing appearing against him, he got his Discharge in two Days, as his Wife informed me, who came and returned me Thanks upon her Knees, protesting that she and all her Family would in that Posture, never fail once a Day to invoke the Blessing of Heaven on every thing I undertook.

These two last Accidens, though but Trifles in themselves, joyn'd to the other Disquiets I laboured under, had an ill Effect on my Constitution——I grew pale, fell away, my Appetite as well as my Sleep forsook me, and in a Week's time I was alter'd to that Degree, as hardly to be known.——Poor dear *Barbara* did all she could to divert me, and, indeed, with her odd Phrases would sometimes make me smile; but, alas! this was a Winter's Sun, which was presently obscured by the gloomy Clouds of Grief——my ominous
Dream,

Dream, the Uncertainty of my dear Marquis's Fate, the Impatience of hearing more of him from *Saint Fal*, was ever present to Mind, and I believe no one, who did not directly yield to Despair, ever suffer'd more than I did at that time.

I was sitting one Day at my Window in a very pensive and heavy Turn of Mind, when I heard a Coach and Six stop at the Door, on looking out I saw it was the old Marquis's.——I started, though I knew not why, but soon found sufficient Cause to be alarm'd, when entering my Chamber, I perceived on his Countenance so great a Melancholy, as in a Man of his Temper, could not proceed but from some very extraordinary Occasion. It terrified me the more also, that I found he laboured very much to conceal it from me: and spoke not any thing which could give me any light into the Affair that troubled him, I took the Liberty of questioning him in my Turn; your Lordship, said I, has been pleased to honour me with the Title of your Friend, and I confess myself too proud of it, not to do every thing in my power to merit it, and would also not be denied the Privileges of so sacred a Name.——There is a Cloud upon your Lordship's Brow, the meaning of which I cannot comprehend; if any unwary Act or Word of mine has given rise to it, I beseech your Lordship to acquaint me with the Nature of my Offence, that I may entreat your Pardon, and atone for it by my future Conduct.——if I am no way accessory, give me leave to share in your Concern.——

I was going on when he interrupted me, by crying out in a kind of inward Agony.——Oh, *Jeanetta!*——*Jeanetta!* how cruelly do you make me feel my Tenderness for my Son.

He had scarce utter'd these Words, than a cold Trembling seiz'd me from Head to Foot.——I was now assured my Dream was fatally accomplished, and the dear Man for whom my Vows and Sighs were offer'd was no more——in that instant of Horror all Disguise was forgot, my Soul unguarded yielded to the dreadful Blow.——I shriek'd, and the Tears burst in Torrents

rents from my Eyes——to speak I was unable ; but heard from the old Marquis that his Son was dangerously, it was fear'd mortally wounded in the Head, in giving the most signal Proofs of his Bravery ; and that the Count *De Saint Fal* was taken Prisoner in the Battle, which happened two Days after.

The Marquis, whether it were that he thought it ill became his Character, to offer any thing, of Consolation to me in this Circumstance, or that the sight of my Grief made his own more sensible, I cannot pretend to say, but he staid with me but a little time ; though I heard him as he went out, bid *Barbara* be careful of me, and promised her to come again the next Day.

He did so, but found me in a Condition little capable of receiving him——the melancholy News he had brought me, threw me into a Fit of Sickness.——I was than in Bed, which I stirr'd not out of for a considerable Time. This excellent Nobleman made his own Physicians attend me ; but on the fourth Day they gave me over, unless Nature, they said, by a prodigious Effort, could throw off the bilious Matter from about my Heart, which was on the Point of suffocating me. They were not wanting in their Endeavours ; but my Stomach was too weak to retain any of the Remedies they prescrib'd, long enough to operate on the Cause which still remain'd behind, and left no hope of my Recovery.

The old Marquis, who came at least ten times in a Day to my Bedside, no sooner heard this, than he be-thought himself of a Medicine, which though never given but in desperate Cases, he had seen some good Effects of——this he made me take, and sat by me during the Operation.——His kind Endeavours had their wish'd Success——the Emetick Dose staid with me for near half an Hour, during which time I suffered Tortures equal to the Rack ; but at last was happily relieved, not only from those poignant Pains, but also from that obstinate Bile, which had render'd so violent a Remedy absolutely necessary. Nor was this all he did for my Recovery ; after I had slept a little, and seemed more compos'd, a Courier came into my Chamber,
booted

booted as from the Camp, and deliver'd a Packet to the Marquis, which he hastily open'd, and having seem'd to read to himself; I expect, *Jeanetta*, said he, assuming a pleasant Countenance, that you will congratulate me on the good News I have just received——my Son is on the mending Hand, the Account we had of his Danger proved a Mistake, and he had only a slight Wound in the Shoulder.

This Intelligence, which I then little suspected was no more than a Stratagem contrived to rectify the Disorders of my Mind, was of such Efficacy, that in a few Days after I began to look once more like one, who might be rank'd among the number of the Living.

Being now judged to be past all Danger of a Relapse, I made my Acknowledgments to Heaven, and to the Marquis for the uncommon Tenderneſs he had shewn to me——he seem'd transported at the good Success of his Scheme, and continued to feed me still with the flattering Hopes of his Son's Recovery, and that he would soon be on the Road to *Paris*.——Nay, went so far as to forge Letters in his Name, which he read to me, that I might be perfectly easy on that Article; and did all this, without seeming to penetrate how great an Interest I took in it; but as though his own Satisfaction would not suffer him to keep it a Secret.

This pleasing Delusion continued, till I was so well as to be able to walk about my Rooms, and the Father of my Lover having then Business, which call'd him to *Versailles*, took his leave of me; but not without leaving a Servant at *Paris*, who was to carry him an Account of my Health every Day till his Return.

I gathered Strength very fast, still delighting myself that the Marquis would be soon at *Paris*, and imagining that when he should come to hear the Truth of my Behaviour, he would not think me unworthy the Tenderneſs, he once had honoured me with. Never did it once enter into my Head, that his Father had deceived me, till I received by the Post a Letter from the Count *De Saint Fal*; I broke the Seal with a pleasing Impatience, expecting a Confirmation of what I

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most wish'd on Earth ; but how great was my Disappointment, when I read in it these Lines.

To the most beautiful *Jeanetta*.

IN Compliance with the solemn Promise you exacted from me at my Departure, I now give you a little History instead of a Letter, in which you will find much to lament, and much to rejoice at——let not, therefore, the first Part overwhelm you so far, as to render you incapable of proceeding to that which will afford you Consolation ; if I hear it does, you must expect I shall not hereafter treat you with the same Sincerity.

My last acquainted you, lovely *Jeanetta*, that my Cousin had obtain'd the Command of a Detachment, and that I apprehended from the Account I heard of him on my Arrival at the Camp, that his Melancholy might hurry him too far.——My Fears, alas ! were but too well grounded.——Courage, doubly invigorated by Despair, put him upon attacking a Convoy, escorted by more than treble his Number ; and beside that fell into an Ambuscade, and without what is in our Days esteem'd a Miracle, a faithful Servant, must have inevitably perish'd——it was to *Dubois* his Valet de Chamber that he owed his Life.——He saw him fall, and transported by his Zeal and Affection flew amidst the thickest of the Enemies, and caught his bleeding Lord upon his Back, and bore him, in all Appearance dead, to the Camp : This Behaviour of his seem'd so new, that it astonish'd both Parties, and for a while occasioned a Cessation of Destruction——all admired, and none attempted to render fruitless an Action which appeared so brave.

The Marquis had all this Time no signs of Life, but on the Surgeons searching his Wounds they were found not mortal, and that his greatest Danger was his loss of Blood.——But make yourself easy, charming *Jeanetta*, he is too much beloved here, for our Fears for him not to magnify every unpromising Symptom.

Two Days after this melancholy ore, the Armies fought a pitch'd Battle; we were the Victors, but I was made a Prisoner, and still continue so; the loss of my Liberty, is an inexpressible Misfortune to me, as it deprives me of the Pleasure of seeing you so soon as I expected, and of doing you what little Services are in my Power.

I send you here enclosed a Letter, which the Marquis had begun to write to me before the Action, and finished after he was wounded; it will serve to convince you, he is not so ungrateful as you imagin'd, nor in so much Danger as you, perhaps, apprehend.——I sincerely wish, whatever becomes of me, his Love and Life may one Day make you perfectly blest.——As what I say on this Account, has no less Sincerity in it than the rest, I know you are too just and generous to refuse me the Continuance of your Friendship, and in that charming Hope, I am enabled to endure all the Tryals a Lover can be put to.

If you think any thing I have done worthy of a Return, it must be in giving me as speedy Intelligence as you can, that you are well.——I should also be glad to hear if my Uncle continues his Visits to you——what you wrote concerning his discovering who you were, fills me with Amazement; but his Behaviour to you yet more, though I know him to be the most artful Man on Earth.——I cannot conceive, however, what Motives should induced him to dissemble with you.——Perhaps, your Beauty and your Virtue may have made him a Convert, as they did me; though I would not wish them to have altogether the same Effect on him, because I fear he would not be so resigning.——In all the Letters he has wrote to me, he has never once mention'd you; I follow his Example, for what I have done in that Affair will not bear clearing up to him, at least as yet.

I am well treated by my Conquerors, and till an Exchange of Prisoners is made, that I am happy enough to receive your dear Commands in Person, should think myself overpaid by a Line, for all I either have, or can do, or suffer. All I am, or ever can be, being entirely devoted to the charming Jeanetta; but I will delay no longer the Satisfaction you may find in reading the enclosed,

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closed, which to give you, affords no small Share of to him, who is

With a Sincerity and Tendernefs,

great as the Charms which inspired them,

Most adorable Jeanetta,

From Mankim,

Your faithfully devoted

De Saint Fal.

Though from the Moment I perceiv'd there was a Letter from the Marquis, I had, indeed, an inexpressible Impatience to see what it contain'd ; yet I would not be guilty of so much Ingratitude to this generous Friend, as not to go through his Letter first.—— 'Tis true there were no Witnesses of what I did on this Score ; but I had a Judge in my own Breast, which would never suffer me to do that thing in private, which if known would stand in need of an Excuse. But now, having satisfied the Demands of Friendship ; Love might be without a Blush obeyed, and I examined my dear Marquis's Letter to *Saint Fal*. The Contents were as follows.

To Monsieur the Count De Saint Fal.

I Left Paris, my dear Cousin, quite frantic with Rage, and I am now running into an Engagement, where my Despair more than my Honour calls me——the Occasion of these Emotions is a Secret to all the World, but shall not be so to you——Jeanetta has deceived my good Opinion of her——She is false——Unconstant——you will not perhaps believe this, but imagine such a Surmise only the Effect of a too ardent Passion, which it is certain always borders on Jealousy——yet what I tell you is fact——She no longer loves me, but gives the Preference to the Duke De——; his superior Quality, and perhaps superior Merit,

Merit, has sway'd her Heart in his Favour, and I am no more remembered by her——this made me quit all that was dear to me——this drove me to the Army——this pushes me on to seek an honourable Death, rather than preserve a miserable Life——I say a miserable Life, for what is capable of affording me any Satisfaction, when she, in whom I had treasured all my Hopes, has so ungratefully betrayed me.——In vain have I strove to tear her Image from my Breast——though she is no longer worthy, yet she is lovely still——the World has no longer any Charms for me, now she is lost.——Fatal Passion, that leaves no hope of Relief but in the Arms of Death.

My Scouts inform me, that a Party of the Enemy is but two Leagues distant——I fly to seek them——Farewel, dear Saint Fal, remember me, and be assured, that though it is something unnatural to love one's Rival, yet you have been always dear to me.

If the new Lover of my fair fallen Angel should deceive her, I beg you will be her Comforter.——We both know her Circumstances, do not therefore forsake her.——

I would not give way to those Emotions, which reading this cruel Accusation rais'd in me, but pass'd hastily on to the other Part, which I found was in a different Hand.

My dear Friend,

I Have been defeated, oppress'd by Numbers, was laid for dead, but am now revived and happy——this last Word may seem a Paradox, after what I have said above; but I will explain it by telling you, that since my Misfortune, I have received a Letter from a Gentleman, call'd Melicourt, which assures me, I am still blest in the pure Affections of my dear Jeanetta: If it be true, as he informs me, I can submit to every other kind of Ill.——I am obliged to the Pen of Dubois to tell you

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this.——I would entrust no other, and am unable to make use of one myself;——write to me soon, I beseech you, and let me know your Sentiments, on what so much concerns my eternal Peace; for if what that unknown Friend affirms he has been Witness of be real, I shall content myself with the loss of an Eye, which is in some Danger, so I have the other left, to behold the dear Object of my Passion, and admire her Charms.——Assist me, I conjure you by all our Friendship, in making my Peace with her, unless you think my late Behaviour has render'd me unworthy of it——if so I should have, indeed, no more to do with Life; but I hope better both from her and you.——I am sensible this is putting your Friendship to the severest Tryal;——but I know to whom I speak, and that's enough.

Yours,

With the utmost Sincerity,

L——V——.

What Tears of mingled Grief and Tenderneſs did not this Letter coſt me! again and again did I read over theſe Marks of his Affection——what would I not have given that Inſtant to have been preſent with him? ——Ah! cryed I, why will not Decency permit me to take a Poſt-Chaiſe and fly to the Camp, and convince him that I think none but his dear Self worthy of my Love, and capable of making me happy?

After a long time ſpent in the moſt endearing Reflections, I began to think on *Melicourt's* Behaviour——his taking the Trouble of writing in the Juſtification of my Innocence, without my deſiring that Favour of him, or even without his mentioning to me that he would do ſo, was an Action appeared ſo truly generous and ſo noble, that it deſerved my utmoſt Acknowledgments. ——I concluded, that a Perſon who could confer a Benefit for the ſole Pleaſure of doing it, had a Soul who would think nothing too great a Trouble that Friendſhip demanded, and made me reſolve to entreat him to
take

take a Journey to the Camp, in order to perfect the good Work he had begun, and assure my dear Marquis, that I was not unworthy of the Affection with which he honoured me.

Having determin'd on this Project, I wrote immediately to *Melicourt*, and sent my Letter by an express Messenger ; I did not in the least doubt but on the Reception, he would come to *Paris*, having had such a Proof of his Inclination to serve me. Especially, as I had heard his own Affairs would not be decided in six Weeks ; the *Nuncio* having been obliged to write again to *Rome* concerning some new Difficulties started by the Parents of *Saint Agnes*, and, therefore, he would have Time much more than sufficient to go where I required.

This worthy Husband of my dear *Saint Agnes* no sooner came to *Paris*, than I made him sensible how kind I took what he had done for me ; and then acquainted him with the News I had received from the Army ; I expatiated so much on the Concern I was in, to have a full Account of the Marquis's Condition, that he perceiving what I aim'd at, was so far from raising any Objections, prevented my making the Request I was preparing for, by offering to go ; saying at the same time that I could not confer a greater Obligation on him, than to give him this Opportunity of becoming acquainted with a Nobleman, for whom he had so great Respect, as the Marquis *De L——V——*.

How greatly does the manner of conferring a Favour, add to the Value of it——they have no generous Souls who wait to be asked, before they grant what they know is wanted.—I was charmed with the Good-nature and Politeness of *Melicourt*, and immediately wrote a Letter, and gave him Directions how to manage the Affair.

We supp'd together, and during the little Repast, all our Discourse was on his intended Journey.—I chiefly insisted on his not delivering my Letter to the Marquis, till there was no Danger that the Surprize of hearing from me would affect his Health ; and that he would

without concealing or disguising any thing, send me Word in what Condition he found my Lover, and in what manner he received my Letter.——Every thing being thus concluded on, he sent his Servant to order Post-Horses to be ready for his setting out next Morning by Break of Day.

All this being settled, and *Melicourt* on the Road, made me much easier than I had been for some time, and though I had still enough to trouble me on the old Marquis's Account, the excessive Tenderness and Concern he shewed for me in my late Indisposition, but too much confirming the Conjectures I before had of his being enamour'd with me; yet did the charming Thoughts of being reconciled to his Son engross all my Attention.——I had no leisure for any other Hopes or Fears; when one is truly in love every thing centers there, and whatever one says, or does, or thinks, is dictated by that alone.

I cannot present the Reader with the Letter I sent by *Melicourt*, the Marquis by some Accident has lost it, and I remember only that it contain'd all the endearing Expressions a Soul overflowing with Love and Tenderness could suggest, without any Expostulations on the Injustice of his Suspicions——the Condition he was in took off all Resentment, and I laboured only to make him perfectly content.

Two Days after the Departure of *Melicourt*, it being the Festival of our Blessed Lady, and finding myself well enough to go abroad, I went to Church to return Thanks for my Recovery, and offer up Prayers for that of the Marquis. It was to Mattins I went, but hearing there would be a Sermon in the Afternoon, I order'd Dinner more early than was my Custom, and returned in the Afternoon not to lose a Discourse, which I was told, there was great Expectations of being extremely elegant.

The Character I had heard was just: A Capuchin preached with so much Energy, Learning and Eloquence, that the whole Congregation seemed affected with it—there was nothing in his Discourse that had a Tincture of the
Pedant,

Pedant, and what he said had more the Air of a Gentleman, recommending Morality to the World, than the superstitious Cant of some of our illiterate Priests.

The great Admiration I had of his preaching, made me look very much upon him, and the more I did so, the more I fancied I had seen him before, tho' in what Place, or on what Occasion I could not presently recollect. I know not how he came to cast his Eyes towards me, but he had scarce looked upon me, when his Speech began to falter, he turned pale, and tho' he seemed striving to repel some inward Emotions which at that Instant seized him, his Endeavours were in vain, and he fainted away.

Every Body was surprized and frightened, and many inquisitive Whispers flew about the Church : one who sat by me, gave a smelling Bottle to a Person that was assisting the Capcuhin, and seeming to know him, was asked by another who he was ; to which he answered, that he was the only Son of a Nobleman, who having an extraordinary Vocation had quitted a great Title and Estate to pass his Days in a Convent, and then told the Name of his Family. I was very near falling into the same Condition with the subject of this Discourse, when I heard it was no other than the Chevalier *D'Elbieux*, — Heaven, however, was pleased to give me Strength to sustain so great a Surprise ; but fearing it might yet have an Effect upon me, I took the Opportunity, while all were busy about him to go out of the Church without being observed.

When I came home I could not help reflecting on the Oddness of my Destiny, which would not suffer scarce a Day to pass over my Head without bringing on some extraordinary Incident or other ; but this was not all, more and greater Matter of Speculation befel me before I slept.

In the Evening, *Forfan*, the old Marquis's Gentleman, made me a Visit, and as he has some share in the Accident of my Life, I believe it will not be improper to give a slight Sketch of his Character.

He

He had been always bred in high Life, without the Means of supporting himself according to his Birth, so was obliged to be a Dependant on others; to gain the Confidence of whom he seemed ever complying to the Humour of those he had a Design upon.—In a Word he was an artful, insinuating Man, and had so much the Appearance of Sincerity, that wherever he attempted to please he surely did so. As penetrating as was the old Marquis *De L———V———*, and certainly no Man was more, he suffered himself to be deceived in the Temper of this Servant; he made him his Confidante in most Things, not excepting the Tenderneſs he had for me, and the other to please him, was perpetually flattering him with an Assurance of obtaining me; but the end of these Memoirs will shew whither in this he fathomed the Bottom of his Lord's Intentions.

He imagined me of so mild and easy a Temper that he should be able to bring me to any Thing, so willingly undertook the Commission of waiting on me, and fathoming my Thoughts concerning the Passion his Lord had for me, which he supposed was arrived at that Height, that he would spare nothing for the Gratification of it.

He began with praising my Beauty to a degree of Fulsomeness, than proceeded to tell me the Effect it had on a Nobleman of the first Rank in the Kingdom, and added, that I ought not to refuse the Addresses of a Person such as the old Marquis *de L———V———*.

I doubt not but he would have had the Insolence even to propose Terms for my Compliance; had I not answered his first Attacks in a manner which shew'd I did not approve of any such Discourses, and on his disclosing his Errand, bid him quit my Apartment, and presume to come into it no more, unless it were to ask my Pardon for the Affront he had put upon me.

Any Man but himself would have desisted a Prosecution which promised so little Success; but imagining the Continuance of his Lord's Favour, depended upon his Skill in this Business, he had the Boldness to come again the next Day, and provoked me so far by his Solicitations

Solicitations that I lost all Patience, and told him with an Air, which nothing but the Occasion could excuse the Pride of, that if he ever dared to approach me any more with such sawcy Offers, I would find some way to make him repent it.

In this Instance now did I find the Misfortune of the Meanness of my Birth——this vile Negotiator, so far from being daunted at what I said, told me with a scornful Smile that I forgot myself——and that sure I did not learn these Airs of Quality in the Village of *D*——; to these Taunts he added Menaces, that he should find means to disappoint all the chimerical Ideas I had formed——that he would enquire into my Behaviour, which he did not doubt but would give the lye to all my Affectation of Virtue, and that he would not fail to represent me in my proper Colours. Having thus vented the Rancour of his Soul, he left me to meditate on what he had said.

I cannot say but I was weak enough to be stung with these Reflections, and shed some few Tears; but they soon passed off, and my Innocence made me perfectly easy. I forsook indeed that his Endeavours would not be wanting to ruin me in the good Opinion of his Lord, therefore without being ill-natured, I thought I might do my best to circumvent him in any Plot he might be capable of forming against me, by resenting in a proper Manner, the first Time I saw the old Marquis, the Usage he had given me.

I was too much confused to be able to do thing this Day, but the first Employment, after my Devotions, that I took in Hand the next Day, was to write an Account to Monsieur de Saint Fal of the Treatment I had received from *Forsan*; I acquainted him also with my Design of getting him removed, in case the old Marquis did not suffer himself to be prejudiced against me, by his vile Offices. But I did not once mention the young Marquis, having wrote so fully to himself by Monsieur *Melicourt* all I had to say.

I had just concluded, when the old Marquis came into my Room; the Surprize of seeing him at a Time when I so
little

little expected him, put me into such a hurry of Spirits, that I could scarce rise from my Seat to receive him. You are writing to my Son, I perceive, *Jeanetta*, said he, snatching at the Letter, which I was hastily conveying into a Drawer. I find, continued he, by your Endeavours to hide it from me, you have no Inclination to make me your Confident in what passes between you.

I could easily convince your Lordship to the contrary, answered I, by shewing you to whom, and on what Occasion I have been writing; but to what Purpose would it be for me to undeceive you in one Point, when it's probable your Gentleman may have insinuated things against me, in which, tho' equally innocent, I could not so easily clear myself.——as I perceived the Marquis appeared a little surprized at these Words, I took the Liberty to continue; the manner, said I, in which you have been pleased to treat me by Monsieur *Forsan*, shews you have little Inclination to entertain favourable Thoughts of me.

Don't let us confound one thing with another, replied the Marquis, who for all his Subtilty was a little out of Countenance, I commanded *Forsan* indeed to wait on you with an Offer of my Heart——this was the Extent of his Orders, and if he has gone farther shall resent it——I have it's certain received some Intelligence, no way to your Advantage; but my Intentions were to discourse you in a friendly Manner on that Head, and gave him no Commission to mention it to you——but all this is foreign to the Letter you hide from me; if you satisfy me in that Point, it will lay me under an Obligation to do as much in my turn——few Women are without Admirers, and Charms, such as yours, cannot fail of attracting a great Number——so that all the hazard you run in shewing me your Letter is, entrusting me with the Secret who is the happy Man: but I assure you, and will bind myself by an Oath never to divulge it; and to make you readier to grant what I request in this Particular, will own to you, that I had much rather it were any other Man, than my Son, whom I would cease to acknowledge as such, if I found he had disobeyed my Commands. This

This is too cruel my Lord, cried I, bursting into a Torrent of Tears, and what I could never have expected, nor deserve——But you shall be convinced I am not of the Disposition you would seem to intimate.——Mean as I am, I know what Honour, Virtue and Decency demand from me, and have never even in Thought deviated from their strictest Precepts——nor by the Assistance of Heaven ever will——Here, my Lord, continued I, presenting him with my Letter, this may convince you of the Intrigues I carry on——I know my Complaisance involves your Nephew——but he will pardon me, my Character, which is infinitely dearer to me than my Life, is at stake——if to be sensible of Insults and outrageous Behaviour be a Crime, I confess myself guilty. With these Words I went into my Closet and gave a loose to my Grief.

I know not whither the Impatience the Marquis was in, to satisfy his Curiosity, gave him leave to take any Notice of what I said; for he had no sooner laid hold on the Letter, than he began to read it, and I suppose with so much Attention that he well weigh'd every Word, for he was a great while in this Employment.

This Girl's Conduct is reasonable enough, said he to himself, not reflecting he was overheard——she may be aspersed, and I imposed on, but if I find I am so——then he stopp'd, and read again, after which——she did not expect my coming, said he, and it's plain had no Design I should see this Letter——there seems to be no Guile on her Part——but I must, and will fathom the bottom of this Affair.

All these Soliloquies I plainly heard, and have since found that People in Years are very apt to talk in this Manner to themselves; I conceived great hopes however from what he said, and from that Moment began to flatter myself with the Belief I should have no Difficulty in clearing up whatever was alledged against me.

The Marquis having finished his Examination of the Letter, came into my Closet and found me overwhelmed in Tears——there is your Epistle, beautiful *Jeanetta*, said he, returning it to me——I ask pardon for
having

having exacted such a Compliance for me——but I had my Reasons——Time will convince you they ~~were~~ not for your Prejudice——dry up your Tears I conjure you, if the Suspicions I have been made to conceive of you are without Foundation, I will not leave your Apartment till you have ample Satisfaction for the injury——I acknowledge to you, *Jeanetta*, that you are very dear to me, and it was my Affection which gave me so sensible a Concern for what I have heard in relation to your Conduct——I am informed that you have a secret Lover, who possesses all the Favours in your Power to bestow——that all the Pretences you make to Virtue, are but Disguises for your Passion——that in spite of your Fondness for this unknown Person, your aim is to make your Fortune by Marriage, and that my Son is the Man you hope to ensnare for that Purpose. That your Affectation of Virtue is only a Bait laid for him, and that you imagine the Passion he is posselt of for you, will bring about your Aim at his Return, if Heaven shall preserve his Life.——Now, lovely *Jeanetta*, continued he, in all these idle Stories, supposing them to be such, there are yet some Truth——I know my Son adores you——I know also you make him a very tender Return, at least appear to do so; his Misfortune of being wounded, and the Condition the News of it reduced you to make me apt to think you are sincere in your Professions to him——and yet what I have been told perplexes me——you best can unravel the Affair, and tell me whether I am imposed upon or not.

I must confess that while the Marquis was talking to me in this Manner, I forgot my Birth, and the vast Disparity between us, and full of the Pride of conscious Innocence, was eager to reply before he had half concluded what he had to say.

My Lord, replied I, looking on him with Eyes which I believe informed him of my Thoughts before my Tongue could utter them, I am more surprized than angry at such base Calumnies thrown upon me——I thank all gracious Providence, who has given me a
Mind

Mind disdainful of all base Actions, and that my Conduct baffles all Occasions of this Sort——were I really guilty of giving way to any loose Attacks, my Answer would be very short; I should tell your Lordship in three Words, that I was not accountable to you for my Actions, because then I should have Friends who would defend me from any Prosecution of yours; but as I am, unfriended only by my own Innocence, and the Charms it has had for my most honourable Protector your Nephew, I am bound to clear myself to your Lordship, from whose hitherto good Opinion I have received such Favours.

As to the last Particular your Lordship mentioned, and in which you doubtless have most right to be concerned, I set too great a value on Truth to deny I have been beloved by your Son, and that he is dear, and will ever be so to me: This you may think a Crime, I am sure it is a Misfortune, and the Source of all I have suffered——without that unhappy Passion my Life had glided on in silent and peaceful Obscurity——but yet, my Lord, I was ever far from expecting the Honour you mention as my due——I am not so partial to the few Merits I am Mistress of, nor can so far forget my native Meanness——tho' at the same Time, permit me to assure you no other Pretensions could ever have made an Impression on me.

I said no more, expecting the Marquis would have replied, but as he did not, and seemed very pensive, and as it were wavering in his Thoughts——you still suspect my Veracity, my Lord, resumed I, or are perhaps offended at the Truth I have been bold enough to utter; but I know how to clear myself from all the foul Aspersions thrown upon me, and at the same Time to ease you of all the Apprehensions you have on the Score of my Tenderness for your Son——before to-morrow Night, I will take a Step which shall force you to acknowledge, I deserved more of your Compassion than Contempt or Anger, and gave your Lordship no just occasion to treat me in so cruel a manner by Monsieur Forfan.

The

The Marquis at these Words seemed roused from the Resvery he had been in, and drawing his Chair near mine, took hold of my Hand, and looking on me with more Tenderneſs than he had done before, let us, beautiful *Jeanetta*, ſaid he, be reconciled: ——— I have more than you imagine pleads for you in my Heart—— you are reſtored to my Eſteem and Friendſhip; and I am perſuaded you neither are, nor will be undeſerving of it.

No, my Lord, reſumed I, with a Reſolution which I knew not if it might not be thought too preſuming for one of my Rank to one of his, but as I have already ſaid, Virtue is allowed ſome Pride, your Friendſhip is as fickle and uncertain as your Prejudice: I have a right to think ſo from your eaſy Credulity againſt my Innocence, and after the Treatment I have received already, what may I not expect——there is no Refuge for wounded Fame, but a Convent——there will I ſeclude myſelf from the baſe World, and never more be in the Power of ſuch a Wretch as *Forſan* to traduce me.

It muſt not be, cried the old Marquis, interrupting me, —— I'll never permit ſuch a Reſolution to take Place; I have Reaſons to oppoſe it, which you cannot yet conceive. I deſire not, my Lord, returned I with the ſame Tone I had ſpoke before, to dive into your Lordſhip's Secrets, but I know my own, and that I am ſo far the Miſtreſs of myſelf, as that nothing ſhall prevail upon me to alter my Determination, except on one Condition.

What Condition, cried the Marquis impatiently? it is my Lord, answered I, that you will oblige the Author of theſe Calumnies to reveal before my Face the Motives which induced him to load me with them, and if I have any ſecret Enemies to diſcloſe and give them up; for it muſt be that either he has been told theſe Stories, or invented them himſelf, and I deſire to be convinced as well as cleared.

The Marquis ſeemed perfectly alarmed at my Thoughts of Retiring, and immediately complied with my Requeſt: he ſent a Servant to order *Monſieur*

Forſan

Forfan to come to him, and in the mean Time omitted nothing that might assure me I should never more have Reason to be dissatisfied with his Behaviour, provided I would not entertain any Design of concealing myself from him.

Forfan obeyed the Summons, and the Marquis gave me the Satisfaction of reprimanding him for the injurious Treatment he had given me; during which the ill-natured Man gave me Looks full of Envy, and when his Lord had done speaking, whispered somewhat in his Ear, I suppose by way of Excuse; but whatever it was, the Marquis took no Notice of it, and insisted on his naming the Authors of those Reports he had brought of my Behaviour——*Forfan* turned pale at this Command, and fain would have evaded it, saying it would be cruel to betray Persons, who out of Friendship to him had given him the Intelligence? At which the Marquis appeared highly incensed, and looking on him with Eyes, that sparkled with Indignation, these Reasons are detestable, cried he, an Accusation not supported by Proofs, argues the Accuser the greatest Criminal; and I begin to believe you had some very unwarrantable Views in prejudicing me against this young Lady. *Forfan* with many Imprecations declared what he had said was not occasioned by any ill Will to me, and only repeated by him in Duty to his Lord, that he might not be deceived by false Appearances.

Let me then know from whom you had these Informations, said the Marquis fiercely——have you less Respect for me than for those you seem afraid to name?

Forfan, terrified at these Words, and finding Evasions, would no longer be of any Service to him, confessed at last; that what he had heard was from a Lady of his Acquaintance, called Mademoiselle *Junia*, who had lately lodged in the same House with me, and was Mistress of my Secrets.

When I heard the Name of *Junia*, I no longer was surprized at the malicious Calumnies thrown upon me——Women of her Character never forget an Affront; and as she could not in reality bring me to be like herself,

took at least a Pleasure in making me be thought so. I gave the Marquis an exact Account of all that passed between us, and had given rise to the Malice she discovered on my Account, and then begged of him, that she might be sent for, that we might confront each other, being determined to have my Innocence made fully appear.

The Marquis seemed to think this Request entirely needless, and assured me he was perfectly satisfied, but all the little Passion I had in me being now worked up to the highest Pitch it could be, I insisted so vehemently on it, that *Forsan* was ordered to go and conduct her to my Apartment. He seemed ready enough to do as he was commanded, and was going out of the Room, doubtless to prepare her for the Business she was called upon to answer, when the Marquis called him back. No, said he, you shall not quit my Presence till we have heard what this Woman has to say: I will have one of my Pages carry a Message as from me to her.

The Page accordingly was sent to her Lodgings *Forsan* being obliged to give Directions where she lived, and as it was but in the next Street she immediately came, and with as much Assurance as tho' she never had been guilty of any thing against me.

I was about to open my Mouth to complain of her Ill-nature, when the Marquis put me back, and desired leave to discuss this matter himself—I beg, Mademoiselle, said he, that you will do me the Favour to relate to me what passed between you and *Forsan*, with Relation to this Lady—I do assure you that no ill use shall be made of it ; therefore must insist you will act with Sincerity.

Junia had been formerly acquainted with the Marquis, and knew very well that he was not a Man to be trifled with, so freely confessed, that hearing Monsieur *Forsan* came frequently to visit me, she had imagined he was my Admirer, and had rallied him on that Subject, telling him that she was very certain he would have no Success, for I had a Lover of a much superior Rank. The Marquis then asked who that Lover was that she

meant.

meant. Yourself, my Lord, answer'd she, in a gay Manner—I know your Lordship has no Aversion to pretty Women, and that you both wrote to, and visited this Lady was no Secret ; so I from thence concluded you were the happy Man.

The Blushes with which my Face was cover'd at this Discourse, spoke at once my Anger and Confusion ; but I forbore giving any Interruption to it, in Respect to the Marquis, and *Junia* went on.

For my Part, said she, I little thought this Conversation would be called over again, nor had so ill an Opinion of Monsieur *Forfan*, as to suspect he would talk of such idle Matters ; he asked me several Questions, indeed, concerning this Lady's Behaviour, in none of which I could inform him ; therefore, if he pretends to receive any Intelligence from me, any more than the few unmeaning Words I have confess'd to your Lordship, he is a Villain, and must have some Designs to which I am utterly a Stranger.

Having spoke this, she made a low Curtesy to the Marquis, and another to me, and quitted the Room ; as for *Forfan*, I believe, he would have given all he had got by the Favour of the Marquis, to have been that Moment an hundred Miles off——he look'd so downcast and mortified, that in spite of the Injury he would have done me, I could not forbear pitying him. The old Marquis seem'd to measure him with his Eyes from Head to Foot for some Minutes without speaking ; but it was easy to perceive, he was incens'd against him to a very great Degree.

At last, *Forfan*, said he, you have shewn yourself utterly unworthy, not only of my Protection, but also of all civil Society, and ought to be banish'd both——you have abused the Confidence of your Lord and Patron——you have endeavoured to blacken the Character of an innocent Lady——you are detected in all this——shamefully detected ; and cannot sure add to your other Crimes, the Presumption of flattering yourself, that I shall ever suffer you to appear before me any more——begone——

This

This last Word was pronounced with so stern an Accent, that the poor Gentleman retired in the most fearful and submissive Manner. If I should say I was not highly pleased with the Victory, I had gained over his Malice, I should be guilty of an Untruth—it is natural to rejoyce at surmounting Injuries, and of all others, those on our Reputation are most sensibly felt; yet now my Innocence was clear'd, I was sorry for the Disgrace of the Calumniator, and interceded very sincerely with the Marquis for his Pardon. No, *Jeanetta*, said the Marquis, I may be deceived once, but will never be so a second time by the same Person.

When the Emotions which this Affair had occasion'd were a little over, the Marquis desired me in the most obliging Manner, to forget the Disquiets he had occasion'd me, and as he had Business of the utmost Importance, which call'd him from me at that time, begg'd I would allow him the Favour of dining with me the next Day—he added, that he would one Day make me ample Compensation for every thing, and said so many complaisant and respectful things, that I was highly satisfied with his Behaviour.—Alas! I little thought of the Troubles in which he afterwards involved me.

The next Morning at Six, *Barbara* waked me to tell me that a Man about Thirty, very poorly dress'd, blind, and led by a Boy of about seven Years of Age desired to speak with me—good God, said I, why did you disturb me, I know no such Person in the World as you describe? But, since it is so, go and see what he would have.

Barbara went away and returned immediately in a kind of Extasy; well, Madam, said she, the blind Man was in the right to make me wake you—he tells me, he brings you the best News you ever heard in your Life.—News that will dry up the Tears you so long have been shedding—I was so rejoyced to hear him say this, that if it had not been for Shame, I would have taken him about the Neck and kissed him.

I could not forbear laughing at my Aunt's manner of testifying the Pleasure she took in every thing that promised Satisfaction to me; well then, said I, since he is the Messenger of good Tidings shew him up to me, I had no sooner utter'd the Word than she flew down Stairs, and immediately the blind Man and his Boy appear'd.

Go on, Child, said he, as soon as he enter'd the Room, lead me to the dear Creature, that I may throw myself into her Arms——that I may tell her how much I have suffered since I saw her——Where is she?——Why does me not meet me——perhaps, Excess of Joy at my unhop'd Return, has thrown her into a Swoon——else why does she not speak——is she not here——does she not see us?

Yes, indeed, Pappa, said the Boy, she sees us, but looks at us as if she did not know us. Hold your Tongue, replied the blind Man, her Silence is the Effect of her Surprize and Joy; but guide me to her——'tis I alone that can recover her, she had always a gentle Heart, and 'tis no Wonder that my sudden Appearance, after being so long supposed dead, has overwhelm'd her.

The Figure of this blind Man, his swinging his Arms about, as if feeling for something, and the Discourse he had to his Boy, I thought so whimsical, that I could not help bursting into a Fit of Laughter. At which he seem'd very much offended, how is this, cry'd he, does she receive me with Contempt? Sure Child thou hast mistaken the House——pray somebody inform me, if these are not the Lodgings of Mademoiselle *De Roches*, who passes for the Widow of an Officer! Yes, certainly, said my Aunt, and here is my Lady herself. Why then this unseasonable Mirth, resumed he?——Has she forgot me, or does she not think me worthy of being acknowledg'd for her Husband, because I have had the Misfortune of losing my Eye-sight since I saw her?——I could never have believed a Wife for whom I have done so much, would ever have been so ungrateful;——but 'tis no Matter, I'll endeavour to love her as little for the future.——I'll see the End of it,

however——in the mean time I shall make no Ceremony——wherever my Wife is there is my Home, and here I shall take up my Quarters.

In speaking these Words he groped out a Chair and sat down; the Boy crying all the while to me——Mamma!——Mamma——pray speak to my Father——you know how passionate he is, and you had better keep him in Humour.

I thought there was something so extraordinary in this Mistake, for I could think it no other, of finding myself claim'd as a Wife and a Mother, and my imaginary Husband taking a formal Possession of my House, that I could not forbear continuing my Laughter to an immoderate Degree.——*Barbara*, whom I had told I knew nothing either of the Man or his Boy, was as much diverted as myself, which so provoked him, that he called us both a thousand Names, attempted to strike us with his Cane, and stamped with his Feet like a Man distracted——indeed, at last I began to think he was really so, and was angry with myself for having turned into a Jest, what rather deserved my Commiseration. To be rid, however, of the Impertinence, I bid *Barbara* take him by the Arm and lead him out; but the poor Creature suffered for going about to obey me: On her offering to molest him, he gave her such a Blow as was very near throwing her down; vile Woman, said he to me, are you not ashamed to give this Reception to a Husband, who took you from an infamous Course of Life, and loved you more than he ought to have done; but I suppose you have taken up your old way of living, and prefer that to Honesty——don't think, nevertheless, that you shall escape being made an Example of, you shall find I have Friends that will take my Part.

The Seriousness with which these Words were spoke, made me grow a little uneasy, and beginning to think he was not mad, thought it best to answer him in a proper Manner: I am very sorry, Monsieur, said I, for the Ill-Manners I unwarily treated you with: I assure you it was wholly owing to my not being able to comprehend

prehend your Discourse——your Mistake of claiming me for a Wife, I now perceive to be owing to the Agreement between our Names ; for I do assure you I am a perfect Stranger to you.——O ! perfidious Woman, cryed the blind Man, did I not take you from the most wretched Condition in the World, and make you my Wife ?——Have I not had several Children by you, of which this is the Eldest, and the only one living——go, ungrateful Creature, I would have no more to do with you, I would abandon you to your ill Fate, if it was not for the Pleasure of Revenge.

Keep you Temper, Monsieur, replied I, a little more haughtily, otherwise you'll oblige me to expose you, by sending for Assistance to force you from my Lodgings. Was ever such Impudence, interrupted he, do you think I'll bear this ?——no, follow if you will your wretched way of Life——I won't stir a Step to hinder you ; but assure yourself I shall stay here, and all the World shall not drive me out.——Go, Child, added he, to the Boy, bid my Man bring up the Luggage, and then he shall order somewhat for us to eat, for this vile Woman, I suppose, will prepare nothing for us.

I was so astonish'd and perplex'd with all this, that I knew not what to say——*Barbara*, no less confounded, cryed, what must we do, Madam ? And, indeed, had any one come in, and seen me stand as I did like one stupified, they would have imagin'd the Man had really spoke the Truth.

His Commands were obey'd, and several Trunks and Boxes brought into my Dining-Room——a *Switzer* Servant, whose Whiskers made me tremble, presented my pretended Husband with a Night-Gown and Cap, and having undress'd his Master, and received his Orders in a Whisper, laid the Cloth, but not finding the Key in the Buffet broke it open and took out what he wanted, behaving in every thing, as if he had been really at Home.

The Consternation I was in, took from me the power of Speech, and I went into my Closet to meditate what was best to be done ; *Barbara*, who followed me no less

terrified than myself, advised me to call in the Neighbours and demand their Assistance; but alas! the unhappy Circumstances I was in, of having pass'd for a Person I was not, deterr'd me; I knew very well that to prove myself not the Wife of the blind Man, I must prove also who I really was, and this was a Step I dare not take without the Consent of the Marquis; and as I expected him that Day, I thought the most prudent thing I could do, was to wait with Patience till he came; which, indeed, was sooner than I expected: for as I was talking with my Aunt, I heard his Coach stop at the Door; I sent my Aunt to acquaint him with what had happened to me, and to beg he would come into my Closet, for I dreaded to pass through the Room, where the blind Man and his formidable *Servants* were eating, as I must have done, had I gone to receive him in my Dining-Room.

He was much surprized at the Relation she made him, but could not help laughing at the Perplexity he found me in. I must own, said he, the Adventure has somewhat in it very particular; but certainly the poor Man must be mad; for no one in his Senses could be guilty of such an Extravagance; but, continued he, we will go and try if we can recover him.

With these Words he went into my Chamber, where my pretended Husband was smoaking his Pipe: And after telling who he was, desired he would inform him on what Pretence he took Possession of a Lady's Lodgings, whose Quality was not to be insulted by any one. To which the blind Man answer'd, that he knew too well the Respect due to the Marquis *De L——V——* to offer to contend with him; but at the same time begg'd leave to assure him that I was his Wife; and had been married to him many Years, however my Artifices might impose upon his Lordship to the contrary.

It was now my greatest Blessing, that the Marquis in Reality knew who I was, for had he not, the Assurance with which this Imposture spoke, and the Circumstances he brought to prove, as he suppos'd, what he averr'd, would

would have made this old Nobleman, penetrating as he was, stagger in his Belief; for my own Part had I been a Stranger, and heard any thing related in the manner the blind Man did this Story, I should have given it on his Side; To careful ought we to be how we judge by Appearances.——

The Marquis now found I did not exaggerate the Impudence and Obstinacy of this Invader of my Lodgings, and having listened to him with a great deal of seeming Patience, he stood for some Moment's considering on what he heard; at last, well, Monsieur, said he, the Arguments you have brought to convince me this Lady is your Wife, are such as must be left to time to confute ——— if she be really such, you doubtless can bring some Evidences beside your own Affelevation to prove it; and if so the Law must determine in your Favour; till then be pleased to accept of an Apartment in my House, for I think you cannot insist on living here, as she disclaims you for a Husband.

The seeming Softness which the Marquis treated him with, render'd him more audacious, and imagining doubtless that there were some secret Reasons for his not openly espousing my Cause; declared boldly that no Man, be he ever of such Rank, should prevail on him to quit his Home, for such that was which belong'd to me——on this, the Marquis appear'd more submissive still, and to found him farther, even condescended to entreat he would accept his Offer, which the other perceiving, cry'd, no, no, my Lord, my Wife is young and handsome, and your Visits here may occasion some Discourses not consistent with my Honour; though I have had the Misfortune to loose my Sight, I am an Officer, my Lord, and have had the Glory to receive many Wounds in the Service of my King and Country.——I am not, therefore, to be persuaded to any thing that will occasion a Blemish on my Character —— I solemnly protest that Woman is my Wife, though for some secret Reasons she thinks fit to disown me, and her Child too; and I will maintain Possession here, in spite of all that would oppose me.

I perceived on the Marquis's Face a kind of malicious Smile at the blind Man's Assurance, and turning to me said in a low Voice, I now perceive this is not a Mistake as you apprehended ; but conceals under it a Design which we shall soon discover——then stepping to the Door gave some Orders to one of his Servants, which I did not hear. On his Return he bid me be easy, for he would engage all would soon be over.

He had some farther Discourse with my would-be Husband ; but the more he affected to sooth the Wretch, the more insolent he grew ; and nothing gave me a greater Insight into the Subtlety of this Nobleman, than the Patience with which he endured his gross Behaviour.

Half an Hour had not pass'd over before the Servant return'd with a Commissary, to whom the Marquis related the whole Affair, adding, that he would be bound to make it appear that the blind Man had no Pretensions to me, for that he was my Godfather, and knew every Step of my Life, from my Birth, till that very Hour.

The Confusion of my unwelcome Guests at hearing the Marquis make this Declaration was such, as is not to be express'd ; both the dreadful *Swiss* and his Master, would now have been gladly out of a Place they so lately pretended a right to, if they could any way have made their Escape ; but the Officers who attended the Commissary immediately secured them ; and only waited the Word of Command to carry them to Prison. Now, said the Marquis, we shall make you, Monsieur *De Roches* as you call yourself, prove by what right you bear that Name, and when and where you were married to this Lady.

The Fellow trembled, and perceiving they were going to lay hold on him, fell on his Knees and begg'd Mercy of the Marquis, protesting that it was with no intent to rob, much more to murder me, that he came to my Lodgings ; but was put upon it by one who said it was only a Frolick to punish and give a little Confusion to me.

Who

Who is that Person, said the Marquis, if you are sincere in your Confession, 'tis possible this Lady may have the Goodness to forgive you. The pretended blind Man now open'd his Eyes, and own'd that he was a Dependant on Monsieur *De Beauhaye*, and that it was to oblige him and Mademoiselle *Junia*, he had undertaken this Business——adding, that they had given him Instructions how to behave, in Case I should have any Friend to take my Part, and that the Plot was wholly theirs, though he was employed in the Execution of it.

I was more amazed to hear such Baseness in one of my own Sex, if possible, than I had been at the Insolence of this Instrument of her Malice; but when he mentioned a Gentleman, as concern'd with her in this vile Stratagem, it struck into my Head, that it was the same who had been disappointed in his Designs upon me; and concluded that out of Revenge he had joined with *Junia* to give me this Disquiet.——I communicated my Thoughts to the old Marquis, who agreed with me that nothing could be more probable; and on our questioning the Criminal concerning the Complexion, Shape and Stature of his Master, his Description agreed so exactly with the Person I had seen come down Stairs, the Night I had so narrow an Escape, that I was confirmed in what I before believed.

Having obliged him to discover as much as he knew of the Affair, the Marquis told him, in Consideration of his free Confession, and as what he had done was not out of any Malice in himself, but in Obedience to a Person he depended on, he would not insist on his suffering those Penalties the Law would have inflicted; so bid him and his Confederates be gone with all their Luggage, and take care how they meddled in such Matters for the future. The Word was scarce out of the Marquis's Mouth, than they took up the things, and blessing both him and I, made the best of their Way out of the House. The Marquis after this, made a handsome Present to the Commissary for his Trouble, and thus concluded an Adventure foolish enough in itself, yet might

have been of very ill Consequence, but for so powerful and penetrating a Friend.

When we were alone, the Marquis was very pleasant on what happened, and told me I ought to think myself very happy, that I was not condemned to pass my Life with such a Husband as this amiable blind Man ; he would have continued his Raillery on this Subject much longer, as it seem'd very much to divert him, but that he was obliged to leave me; and that I was so luckily indebted to his Visit that Morning, was owing to his not being able to give his Company at Dinner, having Business, he said, which would detain him till Six or Seven in the Evening.

After this Storm of my unequal Fate was over, an Hour of Sun-shine broke upon me ; the old Marquis had not left me three Minutes, before I received a Letter from *Melicourt*, with one enclosed in it from my Lover : I looked upon it as highly fortunate, that the Post did not arrive while his Father was with me, to whom I could not well have avoided shewing the Contents of both, and how improper that would have been, the Reader may judge. That from *Monfieur Melicourt* was in these Terms.

To the most beautiful and admirable
Jeanetta.

Madam,

*I Should be far unworthy the Honour of your Friendship, or the Trust you were pleas'd to repose in me, if I delayed one Moment the Satisfaction I dare answer you will receive from the enclosed——for that Reason I shall defer giving you any Account of my Journey, till I have the Honour to see you——this Night having done all the little Service required of me I set out for Paris, where I shall be proud to receive any other Commands, you shall think me capable of executing ——I hope your Health is by
this*

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this Time fully recovered, if it is not, flatter myself the happy Tidings I send you will have that good Effect.—

I am,

With the greatest Respect

and Admiration of your Virtues,

Mademoiselle,

Your most humble and

most devoted Servant,

MELICOURT.

It was well this Letter from *Melicourt* prepared me for what I was to find, in that of my dear Marquis's: Excess of Joy being often more dangerous than Excess of Grief, the Transports I felt, however, were scarce to be sustain'd when I read these dear, and never to be forgotten Lines.

To my Soul's only Joy, the lovely, the
adorable and faithful *Jeanetta*.

I Live my Angel, and receive a double Pleasure in Life, since it is by you I live——your Letter was an infallible Balsam to my Wounds——Death that conquers all Things, withholds his Dart at your Command, and spares me to make what Compensation is in my Power for all the Sufferings I have occasioned you——O! how shall I express my Gratitude for your Forgiveness, for the Continuance of your Affection, after having proved myself so unworthy of it by my foul Suspicions!——Words cannot do it——Actions must——be assured of this? O thou most charming, most excellent of all your Sex; that the whole Employment of my future Days, shall be to make you happy.——I wait with the utmost Impatience the Recovery of my Wounds, that I may make

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you mine forever, and declare to my Father and the whole World, that I cannot live without you.——I rejoice to hear by Monsieur Melicourt, of the favourable Disposition he is in toward you——pray Heaven encrease it to a just Proportion with your Merits.——Adieu, my Charmer, my Weakness will not permit me to explain to you the thousandth Part of what my Heart dictates. Monsieur Melicourt, who has been Witness of my Transports on your Account, I am certain will be so generous as to make you in Part sensible of them; but if you love, as I will no longer doubt if you do, that Love will inform you better in my meaning than any Description whatever——once more farewell——think of me as your own, for it is inconsistent either with my Power or Inclination, ever to be but

My ever adored JEANETTA'S

Most faithful and most tenderly devoted,

L———V———

P. S. Be under no Uneasiness for my Wounds, the Surgeon this Moment assures me he finds so great an Amendment, that I may expect a perfect Cure in a few Days.——See the Efficacy of your endearing Letter.——

From the Camp.

Where now was the Remembrance of my past Misfortunes!——Where the Apprehensions of any future Ills! All were swallowed up in the ravishing Idea of my Lover's Constancy, his Recovery, and the Hope of seeing him in a short time——my Head run now on our mutual Felicity at meeting, and the Means he would employ that we might part no more.——I was all Extasy, all Delight, and it seem'd as if Heaven had decreed I should receive this Letter to give me Strength of Spirits to support me in the most terrible Trial, I had yet ever under undergone, and which was immediately coming on.

After

After having put my Letters carefully up, I sat musing on the dear Contents, and was in that Posture at the old Marquis's Return: The Satisfaction at my Heart made me receive him with an unusual Gaiety——he seemed pleased to find me in that Humour, which, I suppose, he imputed to having been eas'd of the blind Man, and the Discovery of the Baseness of those who had employed him: We had some little Conversation on that Head; but the Marquis seem'd less disposed to Raillery than he had been in the Morning, and ever and anon was very pensive, a Frame of Mind not usual with him. I took the Liberty of asking if I had any way offended him, as I had some Reason to fear from his Reserve; no, *Jeanetta*, answer'd he, I am, indeed, thoughtful on your Score; but the Sentiments I have for you, are far from those of Resentment.——I have been calling a Council in my Heart about you, and after some Struggles all is determin'd in your Favour——I have more than once told you I had great Designs in Agitation for you——they are now compleated, and it is in your power to become one of the happiest Women in *France*;——but Secrecy, Prudence, and Sincerity are necessary in order to it.——I see you are impatient for my Meaning, and I will not keep you long in suspense——if you'll allow me the Pleasure of supping with you, when that is over we may discourse at leisure.

His postponing what he had to say, made me imagine he intended to prepare me by Degrees for something, that he knew would very much surprize me. I cannot but say I had some Anxiety, lest it should be a Repetition of those Offers he had commission'd *Forsan* to make me; but then the high Encomiums he had since given my Virtue, made me think he would not pretend to destroy, what he seem'd to account so worthy his Praise.——Sometimes I was tempted to flatter myself, that he would no longer oppose my being united to his Son.——Various were my Conjectures, but none of them were right, as a little time convinced me.

During Supper we talk'd only of indifferent things, but when that was over, he desired that I would give Orders, that whoever came we might not be interrupted, which I having done, he drew his Chair near mine, and address'd me in the following manner.

The time is now come, lovely *Jeanetta*, said he, that I shall disclose to you the great Design I have so often told you I had for you. Your Virtue, of which I had a high Idea from the first Acquaintance with you, is now so well confirmed, that I will no longer delay letting you know I am determin'd to reward it by raising you to a Rank and Fortune, which you could not but for that have any Reason to expect: not that I make any Reflections on the Meanness of your Birth——Souls have one common Parent, all are alike derived from the great Source of Wisdom and Virtue, who indeed endues some with a much larger Share of his own Divine Essence than others——those whose Reason triumphs over Vice, I therefore look upon as the Favourites of Heaven, and as such infinitely more to be respected than the Favourites of Kings, or even Kings themselves, when they act beneath the Dignity of their Royal Function.

You, my dear *Jeanetta*, are one of those happy few, whom Providence has blessed with these celestial Emanations in a peculiar Manner——in you I find those Perfections of Mind, which I so highly reverence, and I now discover to you, that I cannot behold them united to so many personal Charms and engaging Ways of Behaviour, without desiring to be allied to them——I know very well, that Custom and the common Practice of the World is against me, and that among the Nobility, mean Alliances are never pardon'd——were my Intentions, but even suspected before accomplished, I must expect Remonstrances on Remonstrances, and even what I resolve, perhaps may be disappointed by the Interposition of superior Authority——on this Account therefore every thing must be done with the most perfect Caution and Privacy, and I doubt not
your

your Discretion in acting according to the Rules I shall prescribe.

I believe after what I have said, you are no longer a Stranger to my Meaning——there remains yet but one Thing to inform you,——you know I have an only Son, who pays me back in Duty all the Paternal Affection I have treated him with——I deferred declaring myself to you till I had first consulted him——he seems to consider this Mark of the Deference I pay him with the greatest Gratitude——but see what he writes to me, in answer to a Letter I sent him on that Score.

In speaking these Words, he took a Letter out of his Pocket, and gave it me to read, which I did with very great Emotions the Contents were as follows ;

To my Noble and ever honoured Father, the Marquis *De L——V——*.

My LORD,

THE Marks I have just now received of your condescending Tendernefs to me, are such as demands much more than a Son can pay, since all I can do in Return, is no more than what I am bound in Duty to do, were you less good. Believe, however, I beseech your Lordship, that I think myself much more indebted to you, for your thinking me worthy of this Honour, than for the Life you gave, and also, that had you Thought fit to have acted otherwise, I should still have had the same regard for the Lady in whose Favour you are determined ; being, with a sincere and profound Duty and Submission,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most Obedient Son and
humble Servant,

L——V——

Whether

Whether it were that one is naturally apt to believe what pleases us, or whether I had really Reason from the Discourse of the old Marquis, and the Letter of the young one to imagine I was going to be as happy as my utmost Wishes could suggest, I will not pretend to say, but its certain I doubted not but the next thing this Nobleman spoke, would be the fiat of my Bliss. I returned the Letter, and trembling between Hope and Fear, there was no need my Lord, said I, of this Proof to convince me of your Son's Duty and Affection.

But it may serve, replied he, to shew you the regard I have for him, in consulting him in an Affair, in which I was entirely my own Master.——However, as you seem methinks not yet able to comprehend my meaning——know, charming *Jeanetta*, that notwithstanding the Reasons which opposed my Inclinations, I have resolved to make you the Marchioness *de L—V—*.

Who would not have thought these last Words contained a Decree in which all my Hopes were centered ; overwhelm'd with the most grateful Sense, and as it were out of myself between Astonishment and Joy, I threw myself at his Feet, testifying by that Posture, what in the instant Transport I had no Words to Express.

How happy am I, my dear *Jeanetta*, said the Marquis tenderly raising me from the Ground, that what I am resolved to do for you, is received with so much Satisfaction——I must confess I hesitated for a long Time before I could bring myself to declare my Intentions——I feared your Passion for my Son, might have taken too deep a Foundation in your Heart, and should have been shocked to have found myself refused——But I see my good Opinion of your Prudence has not deceived me, and do assure you that the manner in which you accept my offer has done what I thought impossible, augmented the Love I before had for you ; and in Gratitude for this Softness depend upon it, my charming
Jeanetta,

Jeannetta, I shall always behave to you in such a manner, that you shall confess my Complaisance makes full Attonement for the Disparity of my Years.

I am amazed that it was possible for me thus to remember what the Marquis said on this Occasion, so confounded, so stupified as I was at this unexpected Stroke of Fate, this somewhat so infinitely worse for all my Hopes, than I had ever conceived could happen——the utmost that my Fears had ever suggested from his uncommon Complaisance was, that he would one Day make some Proposals of being his Mistress, and then that Virtue which he had allowed in me, and so much praised, would have enabled me to have evaded any such Offers without offending him; but to find he condescended to make me his Wife, left me without any excuse for a Refusal, excepting such a one as could not be agreeable to him——it was plain that he must be passionately in love with me, to resolve on a Match so every way unequal, and it was therefore natural to believe he would go to any Extremities rather than be disappointed——the least of Ills that could befall me was the being separated from his Son, whether I seemed to approve, or absolutely refused the Honour he intended——never was a young Creature in so terrible a Dilemma, nor knew less what to answer to Addresses at once so advantageous and destruction——to heighten this Perplexity, the Letter I had just been reading from the young Marquis came fresh into my Mind, I now found that his Father had wrote to him concerning his own Marriage, and not, as I had imagined, a Consent for him to enter into that State; I doubted not therefore but my Refusal would now irritate him no less against my Lover than myself, and that Suggestion made me resolve to conceal my Aversion to his Proposals, and gain Time, which in Effect is gaining a great deal, as Chance frequently presents occasions of Relief which we could never have dreamt of.

How is it possible my Lord, said I, for me to reply to you——you see the Confusion I am in, nor can you wonder at it——good Heaven, shall the Daughter
of

of a poor Peasant, with no other Recommendations nor Merit but her Virtue, and a tolerable Face, marry a Nobleman of your Lordship's Rank and Character in the World !

All this Time I had been silent, and while I was speaking this, I perceived he looked at me with enquiring Eyes, and taking me up with some Impatience, I have already told you, said he, that in my Judgment, Virtue much more than supplies all Deficiencies whatever ; and without you disapprove my Offers, you have only to comply to prove the Sincerity of them.

I then pretended that the great regard I had for him made me fearful of his debasing himself in my Favour, but he so well knew how to answer all the little Evasions I was capable of making, that at last I had no more to say, but to appear satisfied with my Lot.

Having thus seemingly agreed, he told me that he had many Reasons to keep the Affair a Secret for some Time, and began of himself to start some Difficulties on that Score——if it should be done at *Paris*, said he, the numerous Retinue which always attend me hither would infallibly discover it; and if at any of my Castles, People in the Country are ordinarily more inquisitive into the Actions of their Superiors than those in great Cities.

The Dilemma which he now appeared to be in, inspired me with a sudden Thought; suppose, answered I, your Lordship should defer raising me to the Honour you vouchsafe, till the King goes some Journey, as his Majesty frequently does : your Rank and Employment oblige you to be near his Person, and while so, your Retinue must be with you——cannot you then, pretending some sudden Business calls you to *Paris*, come with one Servant on whose Secrecy you can depend ; while I in the mean Time prepare every Thing ready for the Ceremony : which accomplished, you may return wherever the Court is——as for my Part I shall remain in the same way of Life as before, till the Time arrives that you shall think proper our Marriage shall be owned ;

owned; and this, my Lord, I look on as the surest means for preserving it a Secret.

The Marquis told me he was infinitely pleased with my Contrivance, and would leave the Management of every Thing wholly to me. The remaining Part of the Evening was past in regulating our future Wedding—more gay, nor more magnificent Prospects were never laid out—we talked of nothing but Rejoycings, Balls, Equipage and Grandeur, when I should be acknowledged for the Marchioness *De L——V——* I came readily into every Thing he said, and feigned a Pleasure in the Pomp I was to enjoy; but alas! what did not my poor Heart endure in this distracting Necessity of Dissimulation! and what had not have given to have it over, that I might be alone to give a loose to my Sighs, and consider what Measures would be most proper to take in so critical a Juncture.

At last the long wished Moment arrived, the Marquis finding it grew late took his leave, and I shut myself up in my Closet—I had now not leisure for Complaints or Reflections, some immediate Resolution must be taken to avoid the Storm, which was already gathered, and was ready to burst upon my Head. The old Marquis appeared too passionate a Lover to wait long—I could not depend on his adhering to the delay I had invented—he might possibly change his Mind the next Day, carry me to one of his Castles, and hazard a Discovery for the Gratification of a Passion, which must indeed be great to oblige him to marry a Woman, whom he had looked upon as so unworthy of his Son.

As I had talked of going some Time to our Village, and had given my Parents Money to furnish an Apartment for me, I thought that Place the securest Asylum I could find—as I had passed unknown by my own Parents, I might reasonably hope not to be suspected by others, and it greatly rejoiced me to think I had never mentioned the least Word to the old Marquis that I had seen them; for I could not make a doubt, but that when
my

my Flight was discovered he would leave no means untried to find out the Place of my Retreat, and that if ever I should fall again into his Power, I must expect all that Revenge could inflict upon me——from Love to Hatred was a Change I could not but be assured of from a Man of his Humour, when exasperated by Disappointment and Despair from a Person of my Station.

Having thus determined once more to re-visit my native Village, I considered what was to be done before I left *Paris* ; what seemed most material was to inform the young Marquis of his Father's Design of marrying me, the Measures I took to avoid him, and the Place to which I withdrew——this Letter took up the best Part of the Night, and I was so greatly fatigued at the finishing it, that I was obliged to go to Bed ; my Imagination however was too much disturbed to suffer me to Sleep long ; in every little Slumber I fell into, I fancied I heard a Noise, and that the old Marquis was coming to take me away and conclude the cruel Marriage——the first Thing I did next Morning, was to write to *Saint Fal* ; for I must have been strangely ungrateful to have omitted making him the Confidante of the surprizing Adventure which had befallen me.

Just as *Barbara* returned from carrying these two Epistles to the Post-House, I received a Packet, and a Basket from the old Marquis, the one was filled with the strongest Assurances of his everlasting Tenderness, and a Present of five hundred *Lewes d'Ors*, the other contained a rich Toylet and its Furniture all of gilt Plate, curiously engraved ; but I gave myself not the Time to examine either with much Attention——every Moment now was precious, and I set about packing up my Things with all the Expedition I could.

I forbore acquainting *Barbara* with my Design, being apprehensive her over Joy at it, might render it impossible for her to keep the Secret——People are as often betrayed by the Simplicity and Babbling of their Servants, as by their Treachery——but to return, in two Days I had got every Thing ready for my Journey,

—as it was impossible for me to take all with me, without hazarding a Discovery by the Quantity of Luggage, I intended that *Melicourt* at his return should take Charge of them and send them to me as I wanted them, in different Parcels, to avoid any Notice being taken.

—I was going to write a Letter and Directions to him, for that Purpose when happily he arrived— I was transported when I heard his Voice, and running to the Stair-case to meet him; you are come very seasonably, Monsieur, said I, a few Hours hence I had been gone.

The Earnestness with which I spoke these Words surprized him, and made him impatient for the Motive; but I was no less eager to hear what Account he had to give me, and obliged him to yield to my Importunities.

—I bad him consider, how dear the Person from whom he came was to me, and then ask himself if any Thing ought to postpone the News of him.

Indeed, Madam, replied Monsieur *Melicourt*, the Marquis deserves all the Tenderneſs you can pay, and he on the other Side is indebted to you for his Life— his Life was deſpaired of at my arrival; but your endearing Letter diſſipated that deep Melancholy, which, joyned to the exceſſive loſs of Blood, muſt ſoon have brought him to the Grave—I am utterly unable to expreſs his Tranſports; weak as he was, he would needs read over the Lines you ſent him I believe an hundred Times in a Day—Monsieur *Melicourt*, ſaid he to me, the precious Treafure you have brought me, has given me more than Life—the Angel!—the Charming Creature, did he cry out in his Extaſies, what Tenderneſs!—how does her lovely Soul ſhine out in every Line!— what Excellence of Nature! ſo kindly to forgive my unjuſt Suſpicions!—but her Generoſity ſhall never be forgot—acquaint her with this, and that as ſoon as I am recovered, nothing ſhall be omitted for the accompliſhment of our mutual Felicity.

In ſine, Madam, continued *Melicourt*, the little Time I ſtayed with him, was wholly taken up in Demonſtrations

tions of his Affection for you——he could talk of nothing but you, and would have sent *Dubois* to you, to give you a more perfect Account of his Heart, than he was able to write ; but that I told him it was needless, as I intended to return immediately ; on which he entrusted me with his Commands, in which I think myself much honoured, and would be glad they had been of a more difficult Nature, that I might the more have proved my sincere Attachment to so worthy a Nobleman.

After this I acquainted him with what had happened, and what I was obliged to do ; he approved highly of my Conduct, and added, that when the young Marquis should come to know the Sacrifice I had made, there was nothing to fear but that Excess of Gratitude would overwhelm him.

I then shewed him the Presents I had received from my old Lover, and told him my Resolution of returning it ; by no means, replied, *Melicourt*, I can put you in a way of making a better use of it : As to the *Toylet* indeed I think it adviseable not to keep it ; but as to the five hundred *Lewis D'Ors*, they are wanted where I believe you will think them well bestowed——the young Marquis has commissioned me to take up about that Sum for him at *Paris*, the Expences of the Campaign having exhausted his ready Money, and the Remittances from his Father are much more tedious than he expected ; so that you never can have an Opportunity of obliging him with greater Delicacy.

I embraced this Opportunity of serving my Lover with an infinite Satisfaction, and immediately put the five hundred *Lewis D'Ors* into *Melicourt's* Hands in order to get remitted to him ; but still continuing in the Opinion, that it was best for me to return the old Marquis all that he had presented me with on the Account of being his future Bride, I gave Orders to have some Part of my Moveables sold in order to raise that Sum for *Melicourt* to deliver to him after I was gone——as to the *Toylet*, and all the Furniture belonging to it, I
left

left it neatly packed up, and after consulting with Melicourt, wrote to the Marquis in the following Manner.

To the Marquis *De L——V——.*

My LORD,

THE excessive Favours your Lordship has heaped upon me, would render me the most ungrateful of my Sex, if I retired without acquainting you with the Reasons, which compelled me to take this Step———know then, my Lord, that so high a Dignity as you were pleased to honour me with the Offer of, demands my utmost Acknowledgments and Gratitude, that I am not capable of accepting it, impute to a Consciousness of my Unworthiness———None, my Lord, can Merit to be your Wife, but who has it in her Power to make an adequate Return to that abundant Love, which engaged you to make her so———Alas! all I have to give is the extremest Honour, and Respect———the Deficiency is therefore so great, that I chuse to retire to expiate my Misfortunes; believe, however, my Lord, that wherever I go, or wherever I am, the utmost Gratitude to you will ever dwell with me———Pardon, therefore, my Conduct on this Occasion, since to have acted otherwise, would have been unsuitable to the Sincerity, on which I value myself, and which you have seemed to approve in her, who is with the most perfect Gratitude and Submission,

Your Lordship's

most humble and

most obliged Servant,

JEANETTA De B——.

P. S. I received the magnificent Present you were pleased to send me; I durst not return it for fear of obliging you, nor did I think proper to take it with me———the Person in whose Care I have left my Affairs will
send

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send it to you, when ever you give Orders, as also the five hundred Lewis D'Ors, all which are in the Lodgings where your Lordship vouchsafed to favour me with your Visits—I repeat my Protestations of an eternal Gratitude, and entreat you will believe no Day shall pass without my most ardent Prayers for your precious Life.

This Letter being finished, I delivered it to Melicourt, that he might send it to the Marquis two or three Days after my Departure ; and it was agreed between us, that he should continue in my Lodgings, till after the Time it could be supposed the Letters I had sent to the young Marquis and Monsieur Saint Fal were come to Hand, in case any Answers to them should arrive, which he was to enclose, under a Cover to me directed to Mademoiselle *De Mainville*, for I was resolved never to be known by that of the Countess *De Roches* any more. Every Thing being thus fixed, he provided me a Post-Chaise, and I set out with *Barbara* the next Morning at four a Clock, to the great Amazement of that dear good-natured Creature, who did not as yet know one Syllable of the Meaning of this precipitate Departure, nor where I was going to carry her.



The End of the T E N T H P A R T.

T H E



THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR,
VIRGIN'S VICTORY.

PART. XI.

BEHOLD me now once more a Wanderer, my Head and Heart full of the various Changes of Fortune I had undergone, and wholly incapable of forming any Judgment what would be the Event of so many perplexing Adventures. All my past Life occurring at once to my Imagination made me extremely pensive and sometimes in Tears, which my poor Aunt observing, shall I never see you out of these Afflictions, said she? bless me! how you People of Quality torment yourselves for Trifles, if you were poor, indeed, or did not know where to go, I should pity you; but, Heaven be thank'd, that is not
your

your Case——you have enough of every thing, and a good Character into the Bargain ; you are not obliged to go away for Debt as a great many are, and some very honest Folks too ; but you have left good Effects behind you, which you may have whenever you please, and wherever you go all the World loves you and pays you Respect——for my Part, I can't see what occasion you can have to be melancholy.

It is a Habit I have contracted, answer'd I, but I flatter myself that when I have been a little while in the Country, the Air will make me more chearful. Do you design to live in the Country then, said *Barbara* overjoy'd ; Heaven be praised that I shall once more see the Fields again, and hear the Larks and the Nightingales——O ! what a a Blessing !——I hate the rattling of Coaches, and all the hurly burly of *Paris*, where one is every Moment in danger of being thrown down.——And pray, my dear Lady, continued she, where are we going ; to your own Village, answer'd I, you know I have given Money to have an Apartment prepared for me at your Brother's ; I would have told you of it before, but as I did not chuse any body should be acquainted with the Place of my Retreat, I was afraid your over Joy would have betrayed the Secret.

Indeed, my good Lady you were in the right, cried she, I should never have contain'd myself that's certain.——O ! the dear sweet Place——why your Ladyship will be admired like a little Queen there——they'll all croud to see you, and the Curate I warrant will come to pay his Compliments——he's no Clown I'll assure you, and keeps the best Company ; in my time they were never without him at the Castle.

Barbara was so transported at the Happiness she was going to enjoy, that she could talk of nothing else the whole Journey.——I did not send a Messenger before to apprise them of my Arrival, because my Father had wrote some Days before to acquaint my Aunt, that all my Commands had been punctually fulfilled, and that every thing was ready for me, so that I knew the Indolence, indeed I may say Laziness, which long Ease
and

and Plenty had given me a Habit of, was in no Danger of being interrupted.

No Accident intervening, at length we arrived at the Village, where the Sight of our Steeple gave me an odd kind of Emotion, between Pain and Pleasure; but sure no Creature was ever in greater Raptures than my poor Aunt—look there, Madam, said she, there is the Church——and where you see those Turrets is the Castle, it is all surrounded with fine Trees, we shall pass by the Gates; and you'll see the pretty Place, where the young Men and Maids dance on Sundays and Holidays. Still as we pass'd she explain'd all the Particulars, and that with such an innocent Satisfaction, as is unknown to those who live in the great World.

Just on our Entrance into the Village, an old Woman was spinning before her Door, my Aunt no sooner observed her, than she made the Postilion stop, and calling out to her made herself be known, and asked a thousand Questions all in a Breath——this good Country-Woman, after recollecting who it was that spoke to her, told her next Neighbour who was folding some Sheep, she ran with the News who was coming to a third, and so on, till we had half the Village about the Chaise.——I bad the Postilion drive on to *John De B*——'s, upon which several little Girls who were playing about, offer'd their Service to shew the way, and ran skipping before the Horses, and brought me in a sort of Triumph to the House.

My Father and Mother, who by this were inform'd of my Approach, came with a great deal of Joy to help me out of the Chaise: My Agitation was so great, that I did not hear half the obliging Welcomes they gave me.——As I was stepping into the House, my Mother made a Motion which frightened me, apprehending I was discover'd: I heard afterwards she was on the Point of throwing her Arms about my Neck, so great an Impression did my Face make on her; but she check'd herself, and conducted me with the Respect due to my imagin'd Quality, to my little Apartment, which consisted only of a small Dining-Room and Bed-Chamber.

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ber ——— the Furniture they had provided for me was plain, but new and convenient, and with what *Mellicourt* was to send after me, would make my Situation comfortable enough.

My Father seemed transported with the Honour of having me for a Lodger, and shewed me from one of the Windows a very neat Garden, the Walks of which he had laid out, and made a Parterre of Flowers on Purpose for me. I thanked him for the Care he expressed for my Satisfaction, and assured him I thought myself very happy in being with him ; nor did my Tongue in this Particular belye my Heart.——Not Absence, nor all the various Changes I had past through, had ever alienated my Affection from those dear Authors of my Being, and whatever Mortification my Vanity received from the Meanness of the Place, I had still a secret Satisfaction in seeing, hearing, and having it in my Power to relieve them.

After a small Repast I went to Bed, to recover, as I said, the little Fatigue of my Journey ; but in reality to have the better Opportunity of meditating on a Plan for my Conduct, while I continued there. I resolved that whoever should seem desirous of being acquainted with me, to lay it down as a Rule to see no Company ; but to pass my time either in Working, Reading, or Walking in the Garden : I also determined to avoid all the Expence I could in my Table, and to eat in a more plain manner, than for a long Time I had been accustomed ; to the End, that whenever the Time that I should be discovered should arrive, I might not be accused of having acted the fine Lady in my Father's House ; but I found it highly necessary I should dine alone, lest too great a Familiarity might give ground for Suspicion, and add to the Impression which my Features, notwithstanding the Alteration in me, had made on both my Parents, which I could easily perceive by their looking so earnestly upon me, whenever I turned my Head away, and did not seem to observe them.

But

But there was one Difficulty in preserving the Secret, which till this Moment never occurred to my Mind. — The young Marquis on his Return from the Campaign would doubtless be impatient to see me; he had been at our Village, and had then been too much talked of and observed, on the Account of the Present he brought me from the King, not to be known if he should come again; and as some Part of my Adventures on his Score were no Secret, his Visits to Madam *De Mainville*, joined with the Resemblance between her and the Daughter of *John De B*——, might give too much room for Belief, that they were one and the same Person——this I knew not how to avoid, and as often as it came into my Head very much perplex'd me. I pass'd the Night, however, better than I had Reason to expect: In the Morning my Mother coming into my Chamber out of Good-manners to know how I had slept; told me the Gentleman at the Castle had sent to enquire who I was, and whether I design'd to make any stay in the Village; to which Questions, she said, she had forbore giving any positive Answer, till she had received my Commands in what manner she should do it.

I praised her Discretion in Terms, which made her see I was highly satisfied, and then told her that I had some private Reasons, besides a natural Propensity to Solitude, which made it inconvenient for me to see Company, so desired that she would on no Account give any Encouragement of that Sort. She assured me that my Desires should be complied with; after which I made her sit down on the Bedside, and remembring that my Father had began to entertain me with the History of Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*; I entreated she would satisfy my Curiosity with the remaining Part, which she readily did in these or the like Words.



*The Sequel of the History of Mademoiselle
D'ELBIEUX.*

I Think, Madam, said my Mother, that my Husband left off where that odd Mistake of Monsieur *Desflour-neaux*, for Monsieur *D'Estival*, occasioned various Conjectures both in the Countess and her Daughter; in the mean time that Gentleman little suspecting what had happened, was considering within himself what Answer he should make to the Mother of his Mistress, and having resolved, came early the next Morning to the Castle — a little later he would not have had Admittance, and must have return'd without being able to comprehend the meaning of his being refused. The Countess imagining she had reason to be highly incensed at his Behaviour, had determined to have him forbid the House; but not expecting him till Dinner, as she thought he had been up so late, had deferr'd giving any Orders concerning him, till she rose herself.

Having for a long time been accustomed to use no Ceremony there, he ran directly up to the Countess's Chamber, and 'tis easy to guess the Consternation she must be in, to see him at her Bedside, accosting her with an easy Air, which is always the Companion of Innocence. She was scarce able to command her Resentment enough to forbear breaking immediately into Reproaches; but either her good Sense, or the Uncertainty in what Terms she should upbraid him, kept her silent, and she only turn'd on the other Side as he approach'd, though that was done with a Disdain, which he could not but have taken Notice of, if he had had the least Suspicion of the Cause. But far from thinking on any
such

such thing, and also taken up with what he was come about, he enquired in his usual free manner how she had rested, and the meaning of her lying so long in Bed. His speaking in this Fashion had so much the Appearance of Dissimulation, prepossess'd as the Countess was of his Falshood, that it but provoked her the more : She nevertheless contain'd herself to hear how far he would carry his supposed Artifice. The Villain, said she to herself, after endeavouring to deceive both Mother and Daughter, now discover'd and discarded by the one, imagines he may still impose on the other——but why should I be troubled at his Perfidiousness ?—What is it to me that the Wretch is married ?—to seem angry would be too great a Proof of my Weakness, and give him an Opportunity to triumph over me.——No, I'll rather seem ignorant of his Baseness, and turn his Behaviour into Ridicule, that will better become my Character than a serious Resentment.

This last Reflection got the better of her former ones, and she turned towards him as just waking, saying she had not slept well in the Night, and that she could not have pardon'd any other than himself for giving her Disturbance. But, added she, I am so impatient to hear the Result of your Determination on our last Conversation, that if you will go into the next Room while I rise, we will talk together as long you please.

No, Madam, replied Monsieur *D'Esival*, I will not believe you heartily forgive my having broke in on your Repose, if you banish me from so delightful a Situation, as I now enjoy in contemplating your Beauties, in the Posture you are at present.——Permit me, therefore, to sit down by you, and I shall declare myself with that Sincerity you exacted from me.

The Countess was too sensible of Flattery, not to be pleased with this Compliment, even though she believed it far from being dictated by the Heart——at another time she would have been charm'd with it ; but the Proofs she thought she had of his Falshood, prevented her from giving any Answer to it, and she only bid him

declare in as brief a manner as possible, what Resolution he had taken.

I owe too much, Madam, said he, to the Civilities your Ladyship has honoured me with, to deal insincerely in a Matter, in which you are nearly interested, and in which it would ill become me to use disguise, when press'd seriously to declare my Sentiments—I will, therefore, no longer make a Mystery of the Passion your lovely Daughter Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* has inspired me with, and though I have all the Regard and Admiration possible for your Charms, yet it is to her my Soul is devoted——this, Madam, continued he, is saying enough, and I think I need not make any Apology, when I assure you that I am ready to marry her whenever you judge our Union proper, and shall with Transport receive her from your Hand, as a precious Pledge of your Esteem and Friendship.

The Countess was ready to burst at these Words——the Answer was, indeed, concise and plain ; but dissembling as well as she was able the Indignation she conceived at it ; so, said she, with an Air of Irony and Contempt ; you are willing to sacrifice all the Passion you have for me, and marry my Daughter merely to oblige me.——I am prodigiously obliged to you, without Doubt ; but, Monsieur, I cannot return the Favour by forgetting I am a Mother, and consenting to my Daughter's Ruin ; for to be plain with you, I hear you are already married, and must be fully convinced in so material a Point, before any thing can be concluded on concerning Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*.——It will, therefore, be much more to your Honour to confess what secret Engagements you are under, than to submit to an Enquiry, which I cannot otherwise avoid making.

Monsieur *D'Estival* was too much surprized at this Discourse, to be able presently to make any Answer : He look'd earnestly in the Countess's Face, in order to discover if she were really serious, or talk'd in this manner only to perplex him, by way of Punishment for preferring her Daughter to herself.

Assured

Assured as she was of his Guilt in this particular, she took his Silence as a token of it, come, Monsieur *D'Estival*, resumed she, you are not the only Person who has been drawn into Engagements they have afterwards repented; but since it is so, the best thing you can do is to acknowledge your Wife.——Pray, bring her to the Castle, you may depend upon it, I shall be glad to cultivate a Friendship with her for your sake.

D'Estival lost all Patience at these Words, if, said he, your Ladyship means this as a Jest, I must beg leave to tell you, it is carried somewhat too far, and is but an ill Return for that Sincerity, I just now behaved to you with——if you really are in earnest, continued he with some Warmth, common Justice without my requesting it, will certainly oblige you to discover the Authors of so base an Information, that I may punish them as their Calumny deserves.

Monstrous Deceit and Insolence! cry'd the Countess, if my Daughter had offended me, yet more than she has, I could forgive her for the sole Merit of having discarded with the just Scorn she has done, a Man capable of such mean Actions, and then as meanly denying them.

For Heaven's sake, Madam, explain yourself, cry'd Monsieur *D'Estival*, impatiently interrupting her, my Honour is too much concern'd in the Treatment you give me, for me not to be resolute in having the Occasion of it cleared up——what Wife, what Marriage is it you reproach me with?——What reason have you to imagine your Daughter has discarded me with Scorn?——I do assure your Ladyship there is not one Word of Truth in all this, and if you persist in talking in this manner for ever, I shall still be in the dark for your Design in it.

The more he protested his Innocence, the more the prepossess'd Countess's Rage encreas'd: Is it possible, said she, that you can carry the Deception to this Height?——dare you deny that you are married? Yes, Madam, reply'd he, and on that Truth will stake my eternal Salvation. This is unsufferable, cry'd she,

know then, Monsieur *D'Esival*, that I was Witness of the Conversation you had last Night with my Daughter in the Park——will you deny she wrote to you,——that you agreed to meet her there——that both you and she mentioned my Name, in a manner no way becoming either of your Characters——that she accused you of a previous Engagement——that you at last confess'd you were married ; but that some of the Forms being wanting you could get off it——that you offered to do so, and Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*, on this Discovery of your double Perfidy, treated you with the Scorn you merit, flew from you, and forbid you ever seeing her more ?

Nay, then, cry'd *D'Esival*, lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, I am either run mad, or you dreamt all this. He then re-capitulated the various Points of her Accusation, and at the End of each, protested his Innocence and Ignorance.

Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* came into the Room as he was speaking, she knew not of his being there ; but making no Doubt but that he was the Person she had met with in the Park the Night before, was not surprized to find him in her Mother's Chamber——assured as she was of their Marriage, she fancied he had enter'd privately, and had lain there all Night.——She was the more confirm'd in this Conjecture, as she found by the loudness of his Voice, as well as by the Dissatisfaction in both their Countenances, that they had been quarrelling as married People too often do ; and being vex'd to meet a Man, who after the Discovery she imagin'd she had made, she detested, was about to retire, when the Countess perceiving her commanded her to stay, saying her Presence was necessary to clear up an Affair, which, added she, with a disdainful Smile, is worthy of your Confirmation and Testimony.

• Monsieur *D'Esival* who was half distracted at what had been laid to his Charge, took hold of her Hand, and having drawn her nearer, repeated the Articles alledg'd against him by her Mother, and appealed to her
her

her for the Decision, at the same conjuring her not to be sway'd by any thing but Justice.

Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* was extremely surpris'd to find her Mother was so well acquainted with her Proceedings; but notwithstanding her Resentment to *D'Estival*, she was very well pleas'd that he denied the Meeting, and thought it was her Business, to second what he said, which she did with so much Assurance; saying, that she knew nothing of all he had mention'd, and that it was contrary to Common Sense, that the Countess enrag'd to the last Degree at hearing herself contradicted in a thing which she imagin'd was true; and, indeed, was so on one side, that she gave her a Blow on the Face; then turning to Monsieur *D'Estival* bad him leave the Castle, and never come near her more.

Yes, Madam, cry'd he, rising from his Seat, you shall be obey'd—you never shall see me more; but remember, and I repeat it before this young Lady, that I never left my own House last Night, as several People in the Village, besides my own Servants can witness—that I had not the Honour of seeing your Daughter either by Appointment or otherwise—that I never told her I was married—and to conclude, that all you have said is a mere Chimera—this is the Truth—so farewell, and I engage my Word of Honour never to expose myself again to such injurious Treatment, as you have been pleas'd to give me.

With these Words he went hastily out of the Room, leaving the Countess no less astonish'd then enrag'd, at his impudent persisting in the Denial of a thing, she believ'd her own Eyes and Ears had witness'd to the Truth of; but recovering herself from the Thoughts of him, she vented her Fury on her Daughter, who still continued in the Room, and after loading her with Reproaches; there, perfidious Girl, said she, throwing the Letter she had intercepted at her Feet, assume the Front too if you dare to deny this too—you see I know you—your wicked Heart betrays itself in every Action—Go, most ungrateful, most unworthy of what I have done for you. And I should act with Pra-

dence after this Discovery of the Vileness of your Nature, to secure you in a Place that would take from you the Means of behaving to me so undutifully hereafter.

Insolent as Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* was, she was a little awed at this Menance; and pretending the most perfect Contrition sued for her Pardon in such Terms that she at last obtained it, from a Mother who very much loved her, in spite of the Coquetry and Vanity of her own Humour.

Having thus made her Peace, she no longer remembered the Occasion she had given of Offence, and valuing the Countess no otherwise than for the Power the Law had given her over her, she bent now her whole Study how to be thoroughly convinced of the Truth of this ambiguous Affair——had there been the least room to doubt she would have concluded *D'Estival*, was not the Person she met in the Park, but the improbability there was, that any one should take his Name upon him, would not suffer such a Thing to enter into her Head——what most confounded her, was, to see the Letter she had wrote to him in her Mother's Hands——she could not think he had sacrificed it to her by the Behaviour of them both, much less now believe they were married, as the supposed *D'Estival* had confessed to her the Night before——the whole Business was indeed too puzzling for a Woman of a much better Capacity than Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* to comprehend, and as she could not fathom it herself, she resolved to try once more her Power over her Lover to unriddle it if possible.

Monsieur *Desflourneaux* in the mean Time reproached himself, that he had not made better use of the Opportunity that young Lady had afforded him, and also that he had been so imprudent to suffer the Secret of his private Marriage to be sifted by her. Had I taken the Advantage, said he to himself, which the Night and her kind Advances in proposing a Meeting, gave me, I might easily have become Master of her Person and Fortune——the Girl to whom I have unadvisedly tied myself, would for a small Portion been content to have renounced all Claims to me, and every Difficulty,
under

under which I at present Labour, would have been removed.

To retrieve therefore what he imagined nothing but his own ill Conduct had deprived him of, he resolved to visit Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*, and pretend that all he had confest to her the Night before, was only a Stratagem to discover how far he might have gained on her Affection, so having convinced his Wife that it would be for her own Interest to deny their Marriage in case any Enquiry should be made, he set himself forth with all the advantages Dress could bestow, and went to the Castle.

The Countess *De N——*, and her Daughter, both in a very ill Humour, were just set down to Table, when Word was brought that Monsieur *Desfourneaux* was come to wait upon them, and neither of them supposing they had any Reason to be offended with him, Orders were given for his Admittance.

Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux* was in too sullen a Disposition to receive him with any Part of that Gaiety she was accustomed to do, on the Account of his satirical Vein of Conversation; but the Countess on the contrary seemed extremely glad of his Company, she knew that Monsieur *D'Esival* had an Aversion to him, and in the Humour she now was, that was a sufficient Motive for her treating him with the greatest Complaisance: As he was naturally vain he grew very much elated with the Reception given him by the Mother, and as for the Daughter's Coldness it did not at all surprize him, because he looked upon it as the Effect of their last Conversation, which he should soon set right again——He was impatient for an Opportunity of entertaining her to that End, nor was it long before the Countess obliged him with one, she perceived her Daughter did not like his Company, and to mortify her, made some Pretence to retire as soon as Dinner was over and left them together.

Desfourneaux on this lost not a Moment, but began to address Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*, with all the rhetoric he was capable of, which she receiving with Disdain, I see, Madam, said he, that the Severity you treat

me with, is owing to the Folly I was guilty of last Night, in pretending to you I was married; but I beg you will be assured I meant it no otherwise than as a Jest, and had you stayed but a Moment longer I should have convinced you of it. These Words made her start, but not being yet well able to comprehend the Mystery, what do you mean, cried she hastily? what Concern is it of mine, whether you are married, or not? How, Madam, replied he, with an Air of Assurance, you seemed to be of another way of Thinking when I had the Honour of your Company last Night.——My Company, interrupted she, last Night, where for Heaven's Sake——you are certainly run Mad, or think to divert me with cross Questions; but I am not in a Humour at present to laugh at your Wit, so would have you reserve it for others, that may think it more agreeable.

As bold as *Monlieur Desfleurneaux* was, these Words quite confounded him, but recovering himself in a Moment, and pulling the Letter out of his Pocket, which had been brought him, instead of that the Countess had intercepted, I have heard, said he, of some Ladies who have denied a verbal Assignment, but thought none would have done it, where their own Hand could be produced as an Evidence against them.

On this she cast her Eyes on the Letter, and to her great Astonishment found in it the same Words she had written to *D'Estival* excepting the Time and Place of meeting altered; this made her examine it with more Attention, and she then found it was her Mother who had put this Trick upon her. She was yet however far from getting any Light into the Bottom of this Adventure——she could easily imagine that the Countess had contrived this Interview on purpose to perplex her, but then she could not account for having accused *Monfieur D'Estival*, with having been in the Park, and of saying those Things which she now found had been spoke by *Desfleurneaux*. All the Satisfaction he could give her in this Point was, that such a Letter had been brought to him by a young Country-Man, and that he complied with the Summons, and then repeated to her all the
Particulars

Particulars of their Conversation——she was now well assured that he did not deceive her; but was so enraged at finding herself thus outwitted and exposed, that she could not help venting her Fury, on him who had been no way guilty of her Vexation.

The Countess heard all this from an adjacent Room, and the whole Affair, being now no longer a Riddle to her, and *D'Estival* quite cleared of what she had accused him, thought the Mistake so whimsical, that she returned to *Desfourneaux*, and her Daughter laughing prodigiously. He imagined by her Mirth, that she had laid this Contrivance on Purpose to turn him into Ridicule, and began to convince the Countess how much he thought himself affronted by telling her this should be the last Visit he would make her; but this Lady, who was naturally complaisant, and besides, fearing if he should divulge this Adventure, it might occasion some Discourse to the prejudice of her Daughter's Expectation, endeavoured to pacify him, and told him that he was no otherwise concerned in the Affair, than by a Mistake, which had been owing meerly to chance——She confess'd also that she had made use of a little Stratagem, in order to punish some Errors in the Conduct of *Mademoiselle D'Elbieux*, and said enough to let this young Lady into the Mystery of every Thing, which perfectly restored *D'Estival* to her good Opinion, and as he was the most constant of all that had pretended to her, and she in her Heart was most inclined also to favour him, from that Moment she began to take a Resolution of rewarding what he had suffered for her sake.

An Opportunity soon presented itself——the Countess being sensible of the Injustice of her Behaviour to Monsieur *D'Estival*, thought herself obliged to acknowledge her Error, and invite him to the Castle again.——As he truly loved *Mademoiselle D'Elbieux*, he had quitted it with infinite Reluctance, and was equally transported at returning to it again without appearing of too mean and abject a Disposition——accordingly he came the next Day, and this short Absence served only to make him appear more amiable in the Eyes of his

his Mistress than he had ever done before this little Interruption of his Visits.

He renewed his Addresses with greater Fervency than ever, and was so fortunate, if the obtaining such a Wife can be called so, as to engage from her a promise of marrying him——the Countess convinced of the necessity there was of her being disposed of, since she had given such a Proof of her Disposition to intriguing as her late Sally, made no Difficulty of consenting to the Match, on which the Nuptials were celebrated with all convenient Speed, and for the first few Days, nothing could be more happy than the new married Pair. The Behaviour of Mademoiselle *D'Elbieux*; now Madam *D'Estival* was so changed for the better, that the whole Family were astonished and blessed the Occasion; but their Joy was short lived, her Humour was still the same and soon exerted itself, with greater Vehemence if possible than ever.

This Harmony had not lasted above fourteen or fifteen Days, when one Morning as she was rising she bad her Woman to give Orders that the Coach and Six, with all the Equipage, should be got ready. Monsieur *D'Estival* asked her with a great deal of Complaisance, if she intended to dine abroad?——Yes, answered she, in a cool and unconcerned Air, and sup too—— I am going to *Paris*: to *Paris*! cried he amazed—— Ay, resumed she, I am tired of the Country, where one sees nothing new, and can support it no longer—— pardon me, my Dear, said he, I cannot think you are in earnest—— I am sure you have too much good Sense to take such a Journey with so much Precipitation, and without consulting your Mother, and hearing her Opinion. I hope, answered she in the most haughty Tone she could assume, I have too much good Sense not so look upon myself as an Infant, or to ask any one's Advice in what I have an Inclination to do—— it would be very extraordinary indeed if I should marry to be a Dependant on the Humour of any body. What I said, answered he, was not intended to give you room to imagine I should wish you were so—you certainly are and ever shall be the Mistress of your own Actions,

——but there are Difficulties in this Step, which perhaps you have not considered——you know we have no House at *Paris*, nor since our Marriage have yet had an Opportunity to order one to be prepared for us, and I know not were you can lodge in a manner befitting you——Pleasant enough, cried she, with a Laugh, which had more in it of Ill-nature and Contempt than Mirth; as if I could be at a loss for a Habitation to my Mind in such a Place as *Paris*——do not imagine, I beseech you, that all the wise Things you can utter shall be any hindrance to my Journey—No, no, I shall set out immediately, and no body shall prevent me——I have contrived how to manage at my Arrival, and don't stand in need of any Directions.

But, said the Husband, beginning now to be stung a little at this Treatment; do you think it becomes a Person of your Birth, to leave your Relations in so abrupt a manner? I give myself no Pain about that, replied she, so all your Arguments are answered.

Monsieur *D'Estival* was going to make some Answer, and, perhaps such a one as would have shewn he was not of a Temper to countenance such Extravagancies, when a Lady, who happened to be a Visiter at that Time at the Castle, came to wish Madame *D'Estival* a good Morning, came in and prevented any farther Discourse on that Subject.

At first, they talked only on indifferent Affairs, when all on a sudden, without the least Preparation or Connection with what had been said before, pray, Madam, cried the Wife of *D'Estival* what is your Opinion of a Husband who glories in playing the Tyrant over his Wife, and takes a Pleasure in contradicting her in every thing? The Lady was extremely surprized at this Question, as well as at the abrupt manner it was uttered in, and guessing there was already some little Pique between them, answered, that she did not think any Man was so unreasonable. I will soon convince you then of your Mistake, resumed Madam *D'Estival*, pointing to her Husband with an Air full of Derision, that worthy Person is of the Number——I have an Inclination

clination to go to *Paris*, have indeed some Business there, and I asked his permission for the Journey ; nay, even begged it in the most tender and obliging Terms, yet he is so cruel to refuse me, pretends he has a Right to keep me Prisoner here, and will not suffer me to stir a Step without he is the first that proposes it——is not this playing the Tyrant ?——I little expected such Treatment from a Man that pretended to adore me, and whose superior I am in Birth and Fortune——I am so provoked, that I know not to what Lengths his Barbarity may transport me.

The Astonishment Monsieur *D'Estival* was in to hear himself thus falsely accused before his own Face may more easily be conceived than expressed——I know not, Madam, what you mean, said he to his Wife, with a Voice interrupted by Passion, but this I know very well, that no other Answer is due to you than such a one as I do not chuse to give any Woman, much less my Wife——I leave you therefore to repent so vile a Piece of Forgery, and reflect what Attonement you ought to make me for it.

With these Words he flung out of the Chamber, and went directly to the Countess's Apartment——the Disorder he was in was too perceivable for her not to take Notice of it, and on her enquiring the Occasion, he readily related the whole Affair to her ; it would have been ridiculous for her to have attempted any Justification of her Daughter's Behaviour, but as there was nothing in it, she did not foresee from a perfect Knowledge of her capricious Humour, she neither was nor affected to be surprized, and told him that she was extremely sorry for what had happened, and assured him she would take proper Measures to prevent any Provocations of the like Nature for the future. Monsieur *D'Estival* thanked her, and was glad she undertook to bring so untameable a Creature to Reason, rather than himself, who he now to his great Misfortune, found had but little Influence. To avoid being even within hearing of the Clamour, which he doubted not would ensue, he took Horse, and went to dine at a Friend's House about three Miles distant, hoping at his return to find all things quiet, and

his Wife in a better Humour, and possibly concerned for having given him this Proof what she could be on Occasion.

But alas! he was yet far from being acquainted with all the Extravagancies his Wife was capable of——the Countess her Mother, received no other Answers, than disdainful ones for her Advice——the other told her she was no longer under her Direction, and would act in every thing as she herself thought proper——it was in vain that this ill-treated Parent remonstrated to her that to go without her Husband's Consent, or even without his Company, as they were so lately married, would render her liable to Censure——and that to disoblige a Man of his Character, was both wicked and weak; her Reply still was, that she would be under no Subjection, and that she saw no Reason for the pretended Superiority of Men, who, tho' the most fawning abject Creatures in the World before Marriage, no sooner became Husbands, than they fancied themselves Masters, and usurped an Authority which neither became them nor was their due——that if other Women submitted to so foolish a Custom, she would not——and added, that if a Journey to *Paris* was even disagreeable to her, she would take it, because he had opposed it, and that she was determined to proceed in this manner with him all her Life.

The Countess provoked not only at her Obstinacy, but the little Regard she paid to herself, said some Things that stung her to the Quick; the other returned the Sarcasms, and Words grew very high between them,——an old Servant, who had attended Madam *D'Estival* from her Infancy, for only entreating she would remember it was her Mother that spoke, was immediately turned out of Doors——the other Servants finding a Person whose long and faithful Services demanded some Love and Respect, was discharged, knew they must expect the same Fate, if they should offer to delay the Commands of their imperious Mistress, so went about preparing for the Journey with such Alacrity, that in an Hour every Thing was ready.

Madam

Madam *D'Esival* being informed of it threw herself into the Coach, and tho' her Mother condescended so far as to follow her to the Door, and even entreat her to consider what she was about, yet she was deaf to every Thing, and ordered the Coachman to drive away.

—The Countess was excessively provoked, the young Lady before mentioned as a Visiter quite amaz'd, and the whole Family in the utmost Consternation at her Obstinacy, all imagining, with good Reason, that this was not the last Trial to which she would put the Patience of her Husband.

Her Mother thinking she ought in Justice to acquaint Monsieur *D'Esival* with what had passed, dispatched one of her Servants with a Letter to him immediately: He remounted his Horse on the Reception, alarmed beyond Measure, to hear his Wife had pushed her Indiscretion so far as to go not only without his Consent, but even without seeing him before her Departure, after the Dispute they had with each other—this seemed so unkind and so contemptuous withal, that if he could not bring himself presently to hate her, it was because he had loved her with a more than ordinary Passion.

The Countess allowed his Resentment to be just, and offered to make no Apology for her offending Daughter, but on the contrary commiserated his Misfortune, and persuaded him to take Post and follow her, endeavour to overtake her at Night, and if he could not prevail upon her to hear Reason, to exert the Power of a Husband and bring her back by Force.

This Advice was too conformable to his own Opinion, for him not to follow it——He immediately sent for Post-Horses, and came up with her in a little more than four Hours: She was just entering a Village, when she perceived him; but far from being daunted at his Presence, or any way wavering in her Resolution, she contrived to get rid of him, by one of the most wicked and shameless Stratagems that ever was invented.

When he came to the Coach-side, and spoke to her, she pretended not to know him, and threatened that if
he

he did not leave her and go about his Business, she would declare he came to offer some Violence to her ; all the Time he was speaking, she still called out to the Coachman to drive faster, but being under a necessity of stopping in the Village, having tired the Horses so much, that they could not have gone much further without baiting, the Husband thought it best to say no more to her till she alighted, and as soon as he saw she was in the House, came up to the Door ; but on his advancing to enter was met by two or three Men, who with great Clubs seemed to guard the Passage, and asked him what he wanted——I am come, said he, to dine with my Wife, what Impertinence is here ?—continued he dismounting, some of you take care of my Horse.

The Man who kept the Cabaret, and was the Person who asked this ridiculous Question, had just received his Instructions from Madam *D'Estival*, who told him she had been pursued by a mad Man, who was in love with her, and so outrageous, that he fancied himself married to her, he is just behind me, added she, and I charge you to hinder him from coming into the House, for if he does, there must inevitably some Mischief happen.

As she came in a Coach and Six, with suitable Equipage, and Monsieur *D'Estival* on a Post-Horse and no Attendants, what she said was readily believed, and the Master of the Cabaret presently called all his People about him, and opposed the injured Husband's entrance, in the manner already mentioned. Finding he had quitted his Horse, and was making his way into the House, they told him there was no Room for People in his Condition——that they were sorry for him ; but he must not think to disturb a Lady of Quality, who did them the Honour to call there, and bad him endeavour to compose himself and go quietly away.

It is impossible to say, whether the Astonishment or Rage of Monsieur *D'Estival* was greatest to hear himself thus treated, the latter, however, made him draw his Sword, and attempt to force a Passage ; but their Clubs soon rendered that Weapon ineffectual ; it was presently

presently broke, and he received several Blows in the Skirmish, the Master of the House and his People calling out for help all the Time, and saying they would manage him for coming there to play his mad Pranks. The whole Village was gathered about them in an Instant, and had it not been for the interposition of the Parish Priest, who came running among the rest, to know the occasion of this Uproar, the unfortunate *D'Estival* might have been almost murdered. It was in vain for him to protest he was really so unhappy as to be the Husband of that wicked Woman, who was all this Time at the Window laughing, and highly diverted to see the Reception he met, not a Creature there but imagined him to be really distracted, and by the Advice of the Priest, and some of the Heads of the Village they laid hold of him, and in spite of all he could urge carried him to the Prison, in order to secure him from doing any Mischief, till they should hear who his Friends were, that they might be sent to, to take care of him——some of the Clowns diverting themselves at his Extravagancy as they thought it, and others pitying him as they went along.

In the mean Time, those who attended Madam *D'Estival* were shocked at this Behaviour, and one of them in particular, took the Liberty to tell her, he was amazed to see she should put such a Trick on so worthy a Gentleman, and her Husband; on which she turned him away immediately, and told him, that if he dared to mention this Adventure, or offer to contradict what she had said, she would find a way to make him repent his Sawcyness.

But this Menace did not intimidate the Fellow, he went and expostulated with the Priest, and several others of those who had been Instrumental in carrying Monsieur *D'Estival* to Prison: He assured them, that he was really the Husband of that Lady who had seen him used so unmercifully, and so far from being mad, that he was one of the most sober and worthy Gentlemen in the World; but they were all prejudiced in Favour of the Lady, as indeed believing it impossible a Woman of
her

her Figure could be guilty of so abominable an Action.

The honest Servant provoked at their Obstinacy, and resolved to serve his Master if possible, rode immediately back to the Castle, and acquainted the Countess *De N—* with the whole Proceeding, who afflicted beyond measure at so horrible a Conduct in her Daughter, set out the next Morning by break of Day, in order to procure the supposed mad Man his Liberty.

The Priest, the Inn-keeper, and indeed the whole Village were terribly alarmed, when they found by the Countess, who was known to some of them, the indiscretion their Credulity had made them guilty of: They entreated Pardon in the most submissive Terms of Monsieur *D'Esival*, who not caring the Adventure should make too much Noise in the World forgave them, but tho' he thanked the Countess for the Trouble she had given herself, told her that he would never see her Daughter more, or if possible even hear her mentioned—she had nothing to offer by way of appeasing his Resentment, on the contrary she owned it was but too just, and agreed to cast her off as a Daughter, as he did as a Wife.

But what Prodigies cannot Love effect——how easily are Injuries, tho' of the most bitter Nature forgiven where the Heart takes the Offender's Part!——it's indeed punishing ourselves too much, to be angry with those who are very dear to us, and human Nature seeks but its own Ease in this Particular. The good Sense of Monsieur *D'Esival* indeed would not suffer him to think she merited any Part of the Tenderness he had for her, and for a Time, whoever mentioned a Reconciliation were sure to receive such Answers as made them soon give over their Mediation.

In the mean Time Madam *D'Esival* enjoyed all the Pleasures of having gained her Point; but at Length growing weary of *Paris*, and beginning to reflect, that a Woman of Condition makes but an odd Figure in being separated from her Husband, she vouchsafed to make some Overtures to him, which he at first rejected with

with a Disdain, worthy of the Wrongs he had received——the more Difficulty she found, the more eager she was; and in spite of the Haughtiness of her Temper, descended to Submissions, which he could never have expected from her; these Condescensions making him hope, she was entirely changed and truly penitent, he again received her with a Promise, never to reproach her with what, she said, nothing but Youth and Inexperience had made her guilty of; and which she swore to atone for by her future Conduct——to preserve her in this Temper, he treated her, if possible, with more Tenderness than before this Breach, and, in fine, seem'd to make it the whole Study of his Life to oblige her; but the Return he received at last for all this Indulgence, ought to render her the Object of Detestation to her whole Sex, since it may possibly deter other Husbands, from behaving with Mildness to their Wives, for fear they should be encouraged by it, to act as she did.

About Three Months after this Reconciliation, Madam *D'Estival* proved with Child: The Countess *De N*——instead of rejoicing, as most Women do, in the hope of being a Grandmother, was very much troubled, not doubting, after the Experience she had of her Daughter's Humour, but that she would make her Pregnancy an Excuse for a thousand capricious Fancies, that would be tormenting not only to her Husband, but to ever body else that came near her; but poor Monsieur *D'Estival*, whose Love had cast a Mist before his Eyes, except when some very flagrant ill Humour a little dissipated it, was under no such Apprehensions; his Tenderness redoubled, and he was all Transport at the News; the Pleasure of being the Father of a legitimate Offspring, most certainly exceeds all others; but, alas! full dearly did he pay for it——all that the Countess's Imagination had suggested to her, was more than accomplish'd, and Madam *D'Estival* immediately gave into such Extravagancies, as one would think no Woman that was not totally deprived of Reason, could have been guilty of.

To say nothing of her Longings, which were for almost every thing to which she could give a Name, whether possible to be procured or not; she affected to take Disgusts sometimes to one Acquaintance, sometimes to another, which must accordingly be forbid the House; till Monsieur *D'Esival* in time, was obliged to banish all his Friends——one Day all the Servants in general were discharged, and others taken in their Places, the next they were turned out again, and the former restored——the Furniture of the Rooms were also continually changed, nothing but pulling down and putting up——selling one thing and buying another, which was no sooner fixed, than it became as offensive to her Eyes as that she had exchanged for it——in fine, always restless and impatient herself, she tired every one about her; yet no one durst presume to contradict her or complain.——Monsieur *D'Esival* was ready to comply with every fantastick Whim that came into her Head, and as he set the Example, all that belong'd to them were obliged to follow it.

It would be endless to recite the many Ways she invented to create Disquiet, to whoever was so unhappy as to be in the way of it; but I cannot omit giving one Instance of her Behaviour, which, indeed, may serve as a Specimen of the rest.

Monsieur *D'Esival* had been from his Youth acquainted with a *Capuchin*, a Man, who being descended of one of the best Families in *Provence*, had renounced with the Gaieties of the World a very handsome Estate; and who for his great Learning, as well as exemplary Life, was highly esteemed by all who had the Pleasure of knowing him: To add to his other excellent Qualifications, he was a Man of singular Good-nature, and had nothing of that Austerity, which instead of making Religion amiable, gives it a disagreeable Air, rather forbidding than inviting to its Embraces.

This Reverend Father, Monsieur *D'Esival* was so unfortunate as to bring with him Home one Day to Dinner, many Friends happened to be there at the same time, and every one was charm'd with the elegant Discourses

courses he entertain'd them with. The mischievous Madam *D'Estival*, perceiving the high Respect paid to him, thought of nothing but how to turn the good Humour and Pleasantry of this Company into Vexation. At last, as no one had more wicked Wit, she be- thought herself of the Means ; the *Capuchin* had a very long and venerable Beard, and she imagin'd, he was not a little fond of it, by his frequently stroaking it while he harangu'd the Company ; so as he was in the midst of a long Story, he had been requested to relate, she interrupted him, by pulling him by the Sleeve, and saying, Father *Raphael*, how much longer do you design to wear that Beard——the Abruptness of such a Question a little disconcerted the good Man ; but without seeming much moved, my Life, Madam, answer'd he, is in the Hands of the Almighty, who alone knows when he shall be pleased to resume it.——I talk not of your Life ; but of your Beard resumed she peevishly ; I want to know if you are not tired with wearing it such a length of Time, and would not be glad some Friend would rid you of it ? No, Madam, said he, little suspecting her Design in asking that Question, I hope to preserve it as long as I live.——I am very certain I shall never consent to part with it, and I scarce think any one will have the ill Manners, not to say Impiety, to attempt to deprive me of it by Force.

Why not, cry'd Madam *D'Estival* ? would you be less the venerable Man you are, without that odious Beard ?——I am surprized a Man of the good Sense you are taken for, should set your Heart on Trifles.

Monfieur *D'Estival*, the Countess, and all who knew the Temper of this Woman, trembled for the Consequence of her concerning herself about the Beard ; but, Father *Raphael*, who little suspected what was in her Head, turning to some of the Company, was beginning to resume the Discourse her impertinent Question had oblig'd him to break off ; when Madam *D'Estival* cryed out, well, I wish I had never seen that Beard.——I am with Child, and it may be fatal to me, if I have not the handling of that Beard.

Impos-

Impossible was it for the gravest Person at the Table, to forbear laughing immoderately at these Words; but the poor *Capuchin* was both confounded and ashamed; however, his good Breeding got the better, and making a very low Bow, Madam, said he, as much as I have hitherto priz'd my Beard, I should be now grieved to have ever worn it, if to the Prejudice of a Lady for whom I have the utmost Esteem; but as your Ladyship's Desires tend only to the handling it, I see no Necessity for its being cut off to yield you that Satisfaction, since you are at liberty to treat it as you please, exclusive of the Razor. That's all I ask, cry'd she, and immediately rose from her Seat, and stood before the *Capuchin*, who presented his Chin to her with all Humility. Every body wondering all the Time what would be the Effect of so whimsical a Fancy.

The Scene was certainly very diverting; you are exceeding good, dear Father, cry'd Madam *D'Estival*, I have long'd these two Hours for a pluck at that reverend Beard, and your Complaisance gives me a new Life; these Words were accompanied with a Look so maliciously arch, which together with the modest Air the *Capuchin* put on, as she approach'd, set the whole Company into a loud Laugh;——but when she seized the Beard with such an Eagerness, as if she did not design to let go her Grasp easily, they were not able to contain themselves——she tugg'd at it with a Force, which was not a little painful to the good Father, and render'd him little able to endure the Mirth, he found her Behaviour excited; for the Love of God, Madam, said he, be more merciful, if you oblige me to gape in this manner, I shall have all the Owls about me fly in to my Mouth.

This Piece of Wit made those that laugh'd ashamed, that they had seem'd diverted with the Humour of Madam *D'Estival*, but it had not the least Effect on her; for having now the Command of the favourite Beard, she held it fast with one Hand, and with the other began to pull the Hairs up by the Roots, and that with so much Expedition, that Father *Raphael* not doubting

but she would demolish his whole Beard in the same manner, started from his Seat, and endeavouring to disengage himself, threw the Lady on the Floor; Monsieur *D'Esival*, the Countess, and, indeed, all in the Room, ran to help her up, and enquired if she was hurt; no, answered she, but I shall certainly expire, if I have not the whole Beard torn up by the Roots. Had any one been disposed to gratified her Humour in this Point, it would have been impossible; for the *Capuchin*, resenting the Treatment he had received, no sooner had his Coin at Liberty, than he very prudently made all the haste he could out of the Room, with a full Resolution never to come again into a Place, where he might be in danger of seeing Madam *D'Esival*.

That Lady no sooner perceived he had made his Escape, than she called to her Husband to run after him, and either bring him back, or tear his Beard off; but all Monsieur *D'Esival's* Complaisance to her, could not influence him so far; on which she fell into violent Exclamations, told him she was certain he desired nothing so much as to see her dead; and that he chose rather to oblige a *Capuchin*, than his Wife to whom he had such great Obligations. Monsieur *D'Esival* remonstrated to her the Injustice of her Request, begged her to consider, that as the Father was resolved not to part with his Beard; how unreasonable it would be to force him to it; and that besides it might be of very ill Consequence, to offer a Violence of that Nature to a Person of his Order, and who was so greatly respected by the Church. The Countess said much the same things, and all the Company joined with them, to beg her to think no more of this unlucky Beard; but nothing was effectual to appease her; she vowed she would sooner destroy herself and the Child she was pregnant with, than be disappointed in a thing she had so much set her Heart upon; and that if she could not have the Beard, the least Attonement her Husband could make her, was to revenge her on the brutal *Capuchin*, who had not only denied the gratifying an Inclination so natural to Women with Child; but had also, without any
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Respect due to her Birth, Sex or Condition, opposed his Strength against her Weakness, and thrown her on the Ground.

Thus what at first seem'd only a Matter of Ridicule, had like to have turned out of the most serious Consequence to Monsieur *D'Estival*; for being prevail'd upon by his Wife, to prosecute Father *Rasbach*, for an Assault, he was near being cast with the Loss of all he was worth in the World.—The *Capuchins* all over *France*, took the part of their Brother, and the Ecclesiastical Court gave it entirely on their Side; so that had not the Friends of *D'Estival* made a very powerful Interest, he wou'd have repented as long as he lived, the engaging in an Affair, which was only pardon'd in Consideration of his Wife being frantick, and who it was alledged, had represented to him the Hurts she pretended to have received, in a manner different from the Truth.

Soon after this was concluded, Madam *D'Estival* brought a Son into the World, who was born without a Beard, though some, to humour her, had seem'd to apprehend the contrary ——— Her Husband rejoiced extremely at this Blessing from Heaven, flattering himself that he was now at the End of all his Troubles, and that his Wife now made a Mother, would come to a more just way of thinking, and give him no farther Occasion to curse the Ceremony that united them; but he was sadly mistaken, a very short time convinced him, that there was no End of his Misery with a Woman of her Temper.

One of the first Places she appear'd in after her going abroad was at the Celebration of a Wedding. a young Lady one of her most intimate Friends was married to a Count; and the Thoughts of being obliged to give Place to the Bride, who was before her inferior, made this restless Woman quite beside herself, and nothing now would serve her, but being made a Marchioness, that she might still preserve her Precedence.

What a new and unforeseen Affliction was this to Monsieur *D'Estival*, he endeavour'd to convince her, that

she ought not to indulge so inconvenient an Ambition, told her that his Estate was too small to support the Dignity of such a Title ; and that as he had never been in the Army, he should be look'd upon as mad to solicit such an Honour. On this she flew into an Extremity of Rage, reproach'd him with having demean'd herself by marrying him, and said, that as she brought him a large Estate, she would have Part of it sold to buy a Marquisate——it was in vain that the Countess her Mother, and all the Relations on both Sides, used their utmost Efforts to get this Whim out of her Head ;——nothing would pacify her, she raved, throwed things about the House, broke all that came near her, and, in fine, behaved like a Creature quite deprived of Reason ; but, Monsieur *D'Esival*, still continuing inflexible, she had recourse to Artifice, fell into pretended Fits, feign'd herself sick, did all that wilful, wicked Woman could, but all to no Effect ; which she at length perceiving, she resolved to be revenged, and to that Purpose stifled her Resentment, seemed to grow easy in her Mind, and to have entirely forgot all that had passed : In the mean time was forming a Stratagem, which had not Fortune assisted her Husband in the Disappointment of, must have been his Destruction.

Happening to be walking one Morning in a fine Meadow adjacent to the Castle, he met one of his Tenants crossing hastily into the Road ; on Monsieur *D'Esival*'s bidding him Good-morrow with his accustomed Affability, the Fellow look'd earnestly at him, and seem'd troubled——what's the Matter, said *D'Esival*, has any Misfortune befallen you ? The other knowing, as the whole Country did, the Disposition of Madam *D'Esival*, could not forbear replying ; I know not whether what has happened to me just now, is for my good or ill, or what Consequence my acquainting you with it may occasion ;——but I cannot forbear letting you know, I am sent by your Lady to put a Letter into the Post, with a strict Charge not to tell any body of it ; it being she says of such Moment, that she
durst

durst not trust the Care of it to any Servant she has. — Now, continued the Peasant, methinks, you being her Husband should not be a Stranger to the Contents, and if you think fit I should carry it, I will make the best of my way, otherwise I think it is but honest to put it into your Hands.

Monsieur *D'Estival*, as he had reason, doubted not but there was some Mystery contain'd in it, which it would be highly proper for him to unravel. — So took the Letter, bidding the Man return to the Lady, and tell her he had punctually obeyed her Commands, and at the same time gave him a *Lewis D'Or* in recompence of his Fidelity; exacting also from him, that he should never divulge, either that he had been entrusted with such a Letter by her, or in what manner he had disposed of it; all this the Fellow assured him of performing, and, indeed, was as good as his Word, Monsieur *D'Estival* being as much beloved, as his Wife was the contrary.

This perplex'd Husband was no sooner alone, than he began to examine the Letter; the very Superscription of which had reason to alarm him, it being addressed to the first Minister of State; but infinitely more was he so, when after breaking the Seal, he found the Contents as follows.

The LETTER.

My Lord,

NOTHING could apologize for the Presumption of encroaching on Moments so precious as yours; but the just Concern of a faithful Wife, for the Honour and Safety of a most beloved Husband. — I have received certain Intelligence that Monsieur *D'Estival*, that Husband who is so truly dear to me, has accepted of an Offer made to him, to engage in a Foreign Service, and is now on the Point of leaving the Kingdom. — I know not on what Motives he has been prevail'd upon, to sever from

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the Duty he owes his King and Country, and the Affection he once pretended to a Wife, who has made his Fortune; yet so, my Lord, it is, and he will very soon quit all that ought to be dear to him for ever, if you do not interpose your Authority, to prevent a Misfortune I cannot hope to survive.——I know it can be done by no other way than by securing his Person for a Time; but, in that, perhaps, he may recover those Sentiments of Loyalty and Love, which I once thought were incapable of being interrupted by any Temptation whatever.——How terrible is it to me become his Accuser, yet would it be yet more cruel to keep Silence in such an Affair; besides, rend'ring myself in some Measure a Partaker in his Guilt.——Pity, therefore, I most humbly beseech your Lordship, and pardon the incoherent Dictates, of a distracted and almost broken Heart.

I am,

My Lord,

With the greatest Respect,

Your Lordship's

Most humble and

most obedient Servant

A. D'ESTIVAL.

As much as Madam D'Estival had done to convince her Husband of the Mischievousness of her Disposition, he could never have believed without this Testimony under her own Hand, that it would have carried her to such enormous Lengths.——He perceived now that her Design was to get him confined, and that while he was so, having the Management of the Estate in her own Hands, she would try all Methods of satisfying her Ambition.——All the Remains of Love, which had hitherto pleaded so successfully in her Behalf, this last vile Action dissipated, and he came to a Resolution of making

making himself easy once for all, which could be done no other way than by an eternal Separation.

For this Purpose he imitated her Example, conceal'd his Resentment, dissembled an Affection he no longer felt, and pretending the sudden Death of a Relation call'd him to *Paris*, took Post the next Day, and went to *Versailles*, where being admitted to the Minister, he laid open his Grievance, and to prevent the Effect of any future Letter she might send, produced that which he had intercepted.——The Statesman, skill'd as he was in Stratagem, was amazed to find so much Artifice in a Female Breast; and after being perfectly convinced of the Innocence of Monsieur *D'Estival*, granted him his Protection.

The next Step took by this unhappy Husband, was to apply to Parliament for a Separation, which he easily obtain'd on shewing the Letter, and proving it to be his Wife's Hand.

Madam *D'Estival* in the mean time was not idle, and though it was not in her power to prevent him from carrying his Point in this particular, she was no less successful in another: As he, infatuated by his Love, had acknowledg'd in the Marriage-Articles, a larger Dower than he in reality received, in Order, as it was pretended by the Countess, to give the Match a greater Air in the Family; she sued in her Turn for a Separation of Estates real and personal; alledging that her Husband was a Gamester and a Prodigal, and would squander away what belong'd to her and her Son.——All the Relations of her Father's side, thought themselves obliged to support this Cause, and as they were very powerful, their Interest carried it; and Monsieur *D'Estival*, was oblig'd to refund all he had receiv'd at Marriage, and to sell his own Estate, to make up the pretended Deficiency——a sad Warning to all Men, how they depend so much on the Love of a Woman above them, as not to secure something to themselves in Case the Tide should turn.

Monsieur *D'Estival*, however, did not appear greatly dejected, the Wrongs he had sustain'd procur'd him much Favour from the distinguishing and truly wor-

thy Minister, that he has since given him a handsome Employment ; on the Salary of which he lives, and with with more real Comfort, than he did in his late Grandeur, with a Woman of such a vile Humour, as was that of his Wife.

Thus did my Mother conclude her History ; and I cannot say, on reflecting how much I had suffer'd from the Cruelty and Malice of that Lady, that I was sorry she had proved to all the World, what I but too well knew she was.

After this we fell into Conversation of several who lived in the Neighbourhood, and as my Mother naturally loved talking, she entertained me with many things, which I knew as well as herself, having happen'd before I left her ; but this she was ignorant of, and thought she did me a Pleasure ; by Accident having mention'd the *Financier*, who was the present Lord of the Village, I entreated she would give me his History ; which she did, beginning with his Intentions of marrying one of her Daughters, and the Occasion of breaking off the Match ; but that Part my Readers are already acquainted with, so I shall omit all my Mother said of it, and come to where she mentioned his purchasing the Lordship of the Village, and his Behaviour since his living at the Castle ; which she did with a Bitterness, which was not usual with her ; but I soon learned the Occasion of it in these Words.



*A Merry Adventure of Monsieur GRI-
PART, COLIN, and his Wife.*

I Never had but three Children, said my Mother, two Daughters, and a Son who died young——the Eldest of my Girls it was whom I have inform'd your Ladyship, was very near being the Bride of Monsieur *Gripart*; the youngest, who though not altogether so beautiful as her Sister is accounted very amiable; she married one *Colin* a Farmer, but a young Man of tolerable good Sense, and very honest——they love each other, and I have the Satisfaction to see they live together with more Harmony and true Comfort, than is frequently the Portion of the Great. For some Months after their Marriage they remain'd with us, and it was during that time, that Monsieur *Gripart* became Proprietor of the Castle.——He had not been long in the Neighbourhood before he became ridiculous by his Amours, which were sometimes with his own Servants, and, indeed, he behaved with so much Indecency to all the young Women that came in his way, that his Presence was avoided with Detestation.——All who were truly modest, or desired to be thought so, fled whenever he appear'd, and shunn'd him like Infection.

He was, indeed, very complaisant to our Family, though the Inducement he had to it, was far from being guess'd at by us.——He sent for my Husband, and having heard he once had the Care of the Castle-Gardens, told him, that if he would undertake the same Business again, he would allow him the same Wages had been formerly paid by the Countess *De N*——. The Proposal was too advantageous not to be accepted with

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Joy; but my Husband declined living their altogether on the Account of his Family; but went at Five o'Clock every Morning, and returned at Eight at Night.

As soon as Monsieur *Gripart* had thus secured *John B*——, who he knew very well was not to be imposed upon in any thing, where the Virtue or Reputation of those belonging to him were concern'd; he came very often to our House under various Pretences, sometimes desiring to rest himself, being, he would say, fatigued with walking; at others, call to know if we could recommend a Servant to him for such or such a Place—— at first he spoke indifferently to me, and to my Daughter; but after coming a few times he took more upon him, and began to be more free with her, than was becoming to a married Woman, and at last told her in plain Terms that he was in love with her;——as she is, Heaven be praised, very virtuous, she rejected this Declaration with the Disdain it merited, and solemnly protested, if he ever offer'd to talk to her any more on that Subject, she would complain to her Husband and the Curate.

Gripart was too much a Coward, to be willing to cope with so lusty and resolute a Fellow as *Colin*, and too covetous to be willing to come under the Rebuke of the Church, which seldom pardons without making the Delinquent pay pretty dear for his Offence; so promised he would be more discreet for the future, and begg'd she would not betray him; she consented to be silent on that Condition, though less for his sake than for her Husband's Peace, who she knew to be a little inclined to Jealousy;——but, the *Financier*, was either too much enamoured, or too foolish to keep his Word; and as he durst not speak to her any more, he contrived a Scheme by which he hoped to compass his Design, without exposing himself to any Danger.

He knew that *Colin* went every Week to a small Town about four Leagues distance to sell his Corn, and and that he never came back the same Night; but was often oblig'd to stay two or three Days away, and on this Absence he founded his Project.

Towards

Towards the Evening of one Day, that my Son-in-Law was gone on his accustom'd Business ; *Gripart* sent a Peasant, whom by Bribes he made his Creature, to my Daughter.——I remember we were just going to Supper, when the Fellow came in a vast Hurry, and told her she must go with him immediately, that *Colin* had fallen from his Horse, and being let Blood was obliged to stay at a Farm-House in the Road, so desired she would make all the haste she could to him ; in order to go on with the Waggon early the next Morning, to sell the Corn for him. My poor Girl, not in the least suspecting the Truth of what was told her, got up behind the Messenger, and trusted entirely to him to conduct her.

It was two Hours after Dark when she arrived at the Place, where she expected to have found her Husband ; but where in reality the base *Gripart* was waiting for her, now imagining himself sure of his Prey ; having, indeed, laid such a Scheme for her Ruin, as nothing could have prevented from taking Effect, but the Interposition of the all merciful and ever watchful Providence.

This Farm-House, as the vile Tool of his Designs call'd it, was no other than a little obscure Inn, where the meaner sort of Travellers used sometimes to bait : *Gripart*, to avoid being exposed, in Case any Disappointment should happen, disguised himself like a plain Countryman, and had invented a Story plausible enough, to make the People of the House of his Party : He told them, that being married to a young Woman for whom he had a very great Affection, he had of late heard some Stories, which made him fearful her Conduct was not such as it ought to be ; but that not being willing to condemn her on a bare Report ; he was resolved to make tryal of her, and to that End had pretended to go a Journey, that she might think herself at Liberty to act as she pleased ; and that he had now sent for her to come there, in the Name of the Person with whom it was suspected she had too great an Intimacy.——So, said the wicked *Gripart*, if she comes it will be a convincing Proof of her Infidelity, and if she refuses I

shall know to give the lye to those who have spoke ill of her.

The Master and Mistress of the House approved very much of his Proceeding, and on his telling them that, perhaps, his Wife on finding she was discovered, would cry out; they assured him, that neither themselves nor any of their Family should interfere between them, if he had a mind to correct her, it was none of their Business—and that they should not be against his bringing her back to her Duty.——Thus was every Obstacle, that could be foreseen, removed from hindring the Perpetration of his black Attempt.

Colin in the mean time happening to meet some Officers, who were employed in furnishing Provisions for the Army, and on the Watch for the Corn-Waggons, expecting to buy somewhat cheaper than in the Market sold all his Wheat to them, and after drinking together, was on his return Home, overjoyed that he had dispatch'd his Business so soon. And design'd only to bait a little by the way, and then travel all Night, that he might reach the Village by the next Morning.

The Inn where he stopp'd for Refreshment, was the very same where *Monsieur Gripart* waited for my Daughter, and on his Arrival, found his Horses were too much tired, the Waggon being that Day more than ordinarily heavy loaded, to go any further; so on the Waggoner's Persuasions, he consented to yield to Necessity, and to lie there all Night.

He was sitting drinking with his Man by the Fireside, when my Daughter came in: He was surprized to see her, but she, who expected him there, ran directly to him, and throwing her Arms about his Neck, ask'd him how he found himself, and said he was in the wrong, not to be Bed after such an Accident.

What Accident, cry'd he, what do you mean?——your Words are as mysterious to me, as the sight of you at this time of Night, and so far from Home? Good God! said she, did you not fall from your Horse?——are you not bruised very much, and oblig'd to be let Blood?——did you not send *John Bibart* the Vine-Dresser

Dresser to bid me come to you in all haste?—Prithee, continued she, turning to the Man that brought her, who thought was just behind her, what did you mean by telling me such an untruth? But she might have spared herself the trouble of asking this Question—the Fellow on his entrance, seeing *Colin*, thought he should make but a bad Figure in this Business if he were examined, so ran out of the House as fast as he could.

Colin considered a little on it, and was convinced in his Mind, that this Contrivance to get his Wife abroad could not be made for nothing, and was resolved to fathom the Bottom of it if possible; in order to which he bid her sit down, while he went to watch what would ensue at the Gate——no body here knows us, said he, nor has heard what past between us at your coming in, so when I am gone, you may ask if there is no Company, or if they don't expect some body here, and by that means it's possible we may find out something. My Daughter no less anxious than himself, promised to do her Part, and as soon as he was gone out of the Room, called for the Woman of the House, and enquired of her according to her Husband's Directions, but was answered by her, that having been abroad herself she could not say any thing to the Matter; but if she pleased she would see. On this my Daughter observed she went up Stairs, and soon after came down again, which as soon as she was, she whispered in her Ear, and bid her go up the Party was above——very well, cried my Daughter, and immediately tripped up Stairs, where she was met by the wicked *Gripart*, who catch'd her in his Arms, crying now my pretty Peasant I will be revenged on you, for all your Coynefs——she shrieked out, but as he had prepared the People, her Cries would have little availed, had not *Colin*, who suffered nothing of what passed to escape him, flew to her Relief, followed by his Man both armed with Cudgels, which they did not fail to exercise with all their Might, on the Arms, Back, Legs, and every Part of the intended Ravisher, who fell upon his Knees, begging for Mercy,
but

bat in vain ; *Colin* would not be prevailed upon to desist till he was no less weary with giving Blows, than the Criminal was fore with receiving them——then leaning to rest himself on his Cudgel, after loading *Gripart* with all the opprobrious Names he could invent, he bethought himself of yet a farther Revenge, which was to bind him Hand and Foot, and in that Posture carry him before the Curate, to be punished as the ecclesiastick Court should determine——this was much more terrible to *Gripart* than all he had suffered :——he begged *Colin* not to carry Things so far as that, and offered a handsome Sum of Money, to be let depart quietly away ; but *Colin*, who took a Pleasure in tormenting him, would not seem to know him, tho' he did so from the Moment he came up, and cried, you do well to think to impose upon me——where should such a Clown as you have the Gold you talk of ?——in fine, he made such a Jest of him, and at the same Time, appeared so positive in complaining to the Curate, that *Gripart* was at last obliged to acknowledge who he was, beg *Colin's* Pardon in his own Name, and entreat him to accept of his Proposal, which with some seeming Difficulty he was at last prevailed on to take, and with that Money soon after brought a Farm, on which they now live in a comfortable manner.

Since this Adventure, Monsieur *Gripart* has behaved with more Decency to Women in general, and I dare Answer is sufficiently cured of his Passion for my Daughter, who he now treats wherever he sees her with a great deal of Respect, as also her Husband, not daring to do any thing to disoblige them for fear they should expose him.

My Mother concluded her little Narrative, with telling me it was on the Account of his Curiosity concerning me, that she had given me this Account of his Disposition, in order that I might be upon my Guard.

I thanked her for her kind Caution, tho' she was far from imagining how little need there was of it, being resolved to avoid as much as possible, a Man whom I
I
knew

knew but too well, and who, even tho' he should not remember me for what I was, might take it into his Head to be troublesome to me in the Person I assumed.

The next Day I received my Goods, which Monsieur *Melicourt* had sent me, and with them a Letter, which cautioned me to be extremely careful how I saw any Strangers. He told me that the old Marquis was outrageous at my Flight——that he had dispatched Persons all over the Kingdom to learn News of me, and to encourage their Diligence had offered a large Sum of Money, as the Reward of him who should be successful enough to find me——*Melicourt* exprest his Apprehensions of my being discovered, and the Effects of the old Marquis's Resentment to me, if ever I should fall into his Hands, after having thus disappointed his Expectations——He informed me also, that supposing his Son was privy to my Departure, he intended to write to him, in order to compel him to discover the Place of my Retreat, or by his refusing Compliance with that Command, to banish him for ever from his Presence. How terrible this Intelligence was to me, any one who loves, and has such Reason to fear for the beloved Object, may easily imagine——*Melicourt*, however, assured me, that the Marquis, in spite of his Indignation, exprest a Concern, that I had not taken the Toylet with me, and said he was very unhappy in being so little known to me——that he would by no means suffer the Effects I had left behind me to be sold, in order to make up the Money he had bestowed upon me——and added, that since he knew not where to send them to me at present, he would order them to be secured for me till I should be heard of.

In fine, all that *Melicourt* wrote, convinced me that the old Marquis's Quarrel to me, was only occasioned by my Departure, and that his Passion for me was not in the least abated——this, tho' it defended me from all Apprehensions of being cruelly treated by him, if he should find me out, gave me others of a more dreadful

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dreadful Nature, on the Score of being loved too much.

The little Furniture which came down, occasioned much Discourse in the Village, it consisted of Plate, inlaid Cabinets, and some other Toys in an elegant Taste, and which had an Air of Grandeur——my Father and Mother could not sufficiently express their Admiration, and my Aunt, who took a great Pride in the Honour, as she thought it, of belonging to me, told the Neighbours that this was nothing to what I had at *Paris*. I was sometimes very much diverted with her repeating to me what the People said of me; but there was things she informed me of, which made me see I ought to be extremely circumspect, if I intended to avoid giving Suspicion who I was.

She told me that her Sister, meaning my Mother, could never look upon me without the Palpitation of the Heart; that the more she saw me, the more she thought me like that Daughter of whom I had heard them speak, and of whom they could not hear the least News, but that I never resembled her so much as when I was in an Undress; and on my Father's saying he thought indeed there was a distant Likeness, but far from what she fancied, she had told him, that she would convince him by bringing him up on some Pretence into my Chamber before I was out of Bed.

This Hint was very useful to me, and to bring them off from any Notions of the Truth, from this Time I dressed every Morning as I used to do at *Versailles*, and *Paris*; and tho' I had never made use of any Art before, I now put some Red upon my Cheeks, to take off the natural Paleness, or rather too great Delicacy of my Complexion. I wore it Day and Night, so that it passed for the good Effects of the Country Air rendering me more robust and healthy, and took away great Part of that Resemblance I so much dreaded, should first or last discover me.

There was one thing that gave me a great deal of Pain how to behave in: I had been in the Village now
twelve

twelve Days, and had never once been at Church; the Excuse of bad Health would no longer pass current, when I looked so rosy, and besides, it was a Duty which I thought I ought not on any Motive to dispense with——Heaven, said I, to myself, can conceal me from the most inquisitive Eyes, when Piety obliges me to be seen, and tho' I were to hide me under the Earth, could also betray me——so that to the same Providence which has hitherto vouchsafed to protect me, will I still trust, fearing nothing so much as rendering myself unworthy of it.

This Reflection determined me to go the next *Sunday* to Church, but as I did not doubt that my Intentions would be a Secret, and consequently a great Number of People would be there to see me, I dressed myself in one of the richest Gowns I had, that I might appear as little like my real self as possible——I also put on a Hood very forward to conceal a good Part of my Face, and went along with my Head declined as looking on the Ground, so that it was very difficult to get a full View of my Face.

What I had imagined was true; the Church was crowded not only with Parishioners, but also with a vast many Strangers, I went up to the Women's Benches, which were immediately cleared by those who were there before me; but I obliged them to resume their Places, and I could hear them whisper to one another, that I was as affable as fair——so infinitely were they charmed with what seemed so great a Condescension in me.

But I was not suffered to remain long in the Place I had made choice of——a Verger came to me in the Name of the Lord of the Village to invite me to his Chapel, I answered him that I liked my Situation very well, and tho' I thanked him for his Civility, desired to stay where I was. The Messenger left me at these Words, but Monsieur *Gripart* then came himself, and told me he could not bear to see a Lady of my Appearance so incommodiously placed, and protested, that if I
persisted

persisted in refusing his Request, he would kneel down by me on the Pavement.

His coming to me in this manner, drew more than ever the Eyes of the whole Assembly upon me, and to put an end to it, I thought it best to comply ; so presenting my Hand, permitted him to lead me to his Chapel, where I heard Mass without making any Answer to the Compliments, with which he endeavoured to interrupt my Devotion.

He was over and above solicitous in acquitting himself politely, and as his Quality was but of a short Date as well as my own, I could not help smiling to myself at the Ceremonies that passed between us——when Mass was over he made me an Offer of his Coach to carry me Home ; but as my Lodging was not above an hundred Paces from the Church, I told him I chose to walk, and indeed it would have been ridiculous to have done otherwise, even if I had had a Coach of my own——at least, said he, I beg your Ladyship will do me the honour to see the Castle, I can assure you the Gardens are pleasant and well designed, *John B*——where you lodge was the Contriver of them ; besides, Madam, continued he, our Country-Maids dance in the Avenues, and may afford you some Diversion. I thanked him for his obliging Invitation, but begged to be excused, saying that it was my Determination to go no where except to Church ; but I should not so easily have got rid of his Importunities, if the Curate had not joined Company with us, as we were talking ; I could easily perceive there was some Misunderstanding between them, for Monsieur *Gripart* immediately took his leave and went into his Coach, and I afterwards heard that good Priest had very severely reprimanded him on Account of his loose Behaviour, which made him afterwards not very easy in his Company.

He addressed himself to me with a great deal of Respect, and told me he had taken great Notice of my Behaviour during Divine Service, that I was a Pattern,
which

which he should rejoice to find his whole Congregation endeavour to imitate, and that as the Manners of People of Condition, had for the most Part an Influence over the meaner Sort, he hoped mine would lose nothing of their Force. I answered this Compliment with the Humility due to his Function, and had no sooner done so than my Father and Mother came up to us, and after saying some handsome Things on the honour they had of having me for a Lodger, he desired they would use all the Interest they had with me, to prevail on me to dine with him that Day——He told me, that he had a Neice who was dying with impatience to see a Lady, whose Praises she had heard from the Mouth of every body in the Village——my Father and Mother seconded his Request, and I was so beset on all sides, that notwithstanding my Resolution, I was obliged to comply.——The Curate appeared infinitely satisfied and thought he had Reason to be more so, as I had refused the same Favour to the Lord of the Village, and when we came to his House, the Neice he mentioned, who was a very agreeable young Woman, received me with the greatest Complaisance and Respect.

The Curate, who little imagined I was that *Jeanetta*, whom the Marquis *De L——V——* had sent *Dubois* to enquire after, as mentioned in the beginning of these Memoirs, had a very great Curiosity to know who I was, and hearing I was called *Madam De Mainville*, said to me at we were at Table, I once knew a Gentleman named *Monsieur De Mainville* who belonged to the Sea, perhaps, Madam, he might be a Relation to you.

I easily perceived he introduced this Discourse in order to discover by my Answer somewhat concerning me, so was entirely on my Guard, and beseeched he would not oblige me to enter into Conversation, which would remind me of the loss of a beloved Husband.

This Reply of mine agreeing exactly with the Account my Aunt had given, that I was always lamenting for the Death of my Husband, obliged him out of good Manners,

Manners to talk of other Things ; but I, who wanted very much to be at home, for fear of any Accident happening to betray me, appeared so much dejected, and counterfeited so deep a Melancholy, that he was extremely troubled at having occasioned, as he imagined, so great a change in me.

I was just about to take my leave when *Colin* and his Wife came in ; as I had never seen my Sister since my coming, and was easily persuaded to sit a Moment longer, that I might have the pleasure of being in her Company, but indulging this natural Affection occasioned me some Alarms, and convinced me that the Passion of Love is stronger than the Tenderness of Consanguinity.

———*Colin*, who had felt that Passion for me, had my Features more deeply imprinted in his Memory than in that of either my Father, Mother, or Sister.———He looked upon me with Astonishment, and cried out, I am sure I have seen that Face before ! —— That may possibly be true, replied I, with an Air of Reserve and Dignity which awed him, and I believe made him repent his Abruptness, for he hung down his Head and spoke no more. I could not help however being terribly confused, which the Company taking as Resentment for his ill Manners, my Father, Mother, and Sister thought they could never make sufficient Apologies for him———the Curate and his Neice also asked Pardon for him, and I was obliged to protest I thought of it no more, before they could be easy.

All this took up so much Time, that the Bell-rung for Vespers, on which I came away, the good Priest and his Neice would fain have engaged me to return after Prayers were over, and pass the Evening, but I excused myself, pretending I had Letters to write, and could not possibly do myself that pleasure.

His Neice came the next Day to pay her Compliments, I received her with all imaginable Affability, but was very reserved, so she stayed but a short Time. Soon after I invited her, and her Uncle to dine with me, and having paid that Debt, evaded any farther meetings

meetings——all my Behaviour made it evident I did not care for Company, and at length I was not importuned on that score.

If the fear of Discovery had not given me just Reason to avoid Company, the trouble I was in, would have made me desirous of Solitude——a Month was now past over since I left *Paris*, and I had received no Letter from the Marquis, and the various Apprehensions that perplexed me on this score, rendered me as unfit for Society as unwilling to come into it——I was all in Tears one Morning, when my Mother came into my Chamber, to tell me a Man on Horseback asked to speak with me, but would not alight till he knew if I were at home and alone——a sudden Trembling, with a Pain mix'd with Pleasure, seized me at hearing what she said——I fancied he came from the young Marquis, and at the same Time dreaded lest he were sent by the Father of that dear Man——Suspence however was not to be borne——it was proper I should know the Message, be it from either the one or other, so desired he should be admitted, and then retired to a Closet I had next the Garden, that I might hear what he had to say to me, without danger of having any other Witness of it.

As the Person entered, a spring of Joy came over my Heart, in hopes it was *Dubois*, from whom I knew I might be certain of hearing a full Account of every thing, but when I saw it was not he, but a Man with a large Plaister on his Forehead, I turned away my Eyes, and received a Letter which he delivered to me, without taking any farther Notice, than to give him a Crown, and bid him go and refresh himself at the next Cabaret, adding, that I would send for him when I had wrote, in case the Letter he brought required any Answer.

I then looked on the Supercription, and found it was in the Character of my dear Marquis——I then, impatient for the Contents, broke it hastily open, and to my inexpressible Amazement, saw there was no more
wrote

wrote on the Paper than one Line : The Words of which were these ;

Dearest *Jeanetta*,

The Courier will tell you all the Soul of your Adorer.

L———V———.

O Heavens ! cried I, what can this mean ?——where is this Courier ?———why did he go, if he had any thing to say to me !

I was just turning to ring for *Barbara*, to call him back, unable as I was to comprehend this Mystery, when I saw him on his Knees before me——what do I see ! then screamed I out in a Transport of Joy, and throwing myself on the Neck of this charming Courier, for it was no other than the Marquis himself, who thus disguised, had been his own Messenger——is it you my Lord ?——is it you ?———I could say no more———so dear and so unexpected a Sight overwhelmed me, and I was near swooning with Excess of Joy.

The Marquis was troubled that he had thus surprized me, and asked my Pardon a thousand and a thousand Times ; but alas ! what Occasion was there for doing so———the Transport well over paid the little Alarm I felt at its first too violent Emotion ; I obliged him to sit down, and made in my turn an endearing Apology for not having known him. Indeed I could not forbear smiling at the Reception I gave him, especially when he mentioned the grave Air with which I put the Crown into his Hand, and bid him go to a Cabaret, till I sent Orders to him ; we were very merry some time on this, after which I began to think he might in good earnest stand in need of some Refreshment, so called to *Barbara*, to lay the Cloth.

He was indeed so much weakened by his Wounds, that the Journey had fatigued him more than it would have done at an other Time, and he readily accepted of my Offer ; while Breakfast was getting ready, we began
to

to consider in what manner we should behave, so as to give no occasion to any Discourse to the prejudice of my Reputation; and after various Projects it was agreed upon between us, that he should pass for my Brother. He told me all the Servants he had with him he had hired but that Day, and had not acquainted them either with his Name or Quality, so that knowing him only for an Officer just arrived from the Army, it was not in their power to make any Discovery, in case they should be questioned concerning him. I applauded his Prudence in this, also for wearing that large Patch on his Forehead, which altered him so much, that there was no Danger of his being known by Persons who had never seen him but once, when he came to bring me the Favour conferred on me by the King.

My Supposition that the Patch was only worn for a Disguise, kept me from asking any Questions concerning it, till at length remembering one of the Wounds he had received was on his Head; I asked if it were entirely healed. No, answered he, my Surgeon, at my leaving the Camp gave me Medicines, with which my Servant dresses it every Day, but assured me that all the Danger that arose from it was over, and that in eight Days there would be nothing but the Scar remaining. O Heaven! cried I, frightened at what he said, why would you venture to ride Post before you were perfectly recovered? should any ill Consequence attend this Journey, what would become of the unfortunate *Jeanetta*, who has been the innocent Occasion of it?

The Marquis took this Exclamation so kindly, that he caught both my Hands between his, and pressed them to his Mouth, with such an Eagerness as if he meant to devour them with his Kisses, make yourself easy, my charming *Jeanetta*, said the dear Man, and the soft Concern you express for my Safety, will compleat my Cure much sooner than could be expected——

Be assured, had I been deprived much longer of your Society, I must have sunk under the burthen of my Grief and Impatience—*Dubois*, who plainly saw that my

Absence

Absence from you was the chief Obstacle to my Cure, propos'd my taking this Journey——Neither did I ride Post as you imagin'd, but came in my Chaise, which is very easy, and with my own Horses, till I came within two Miles of the Village, and then came hither on one of those belonging to my Men.——Yes, my dearest *Jeanetta*, continued he, I am convinc'd how absolutely necessary your Presence is to my Recovery by the Effect, the very Thought I was drawing nearer you have had upon my Wounds——every Day I felt still more and more the Benefit, and if you permit me to remain in a Place where I may enjoy the Pleasure of your Conversation, I am very certain you will shortly see a wonderful Experiment, how far the Contentment of the Mind, serves to render the Body in perfect ease——Consent therefore, my Angel, added he, that I may continue for a few Days at least in this Village ; what I have suffer'd since our parting, demands this Recompence, and I flatter myself you will not refuse it.

How could I indeed refuse so small a Request, to so great a Passion ! and at the same Time, what was so pleasing to my own Inclinations——had I been less acquainted with the Honour of him who ask'd it, I should not have so readily agreed, however my secret Wishes might have pleaded in his Behalf ; but I had experienced his Moderation in a thousand Instances, and it must have been owing either to Injustice or Affectation had I seem'd to suspect it now, so that without making any Difficulty or Hesitation, you are determin'd to pretend yourself my Brother, answer'd I, and under that Name may stay here as long as you shall find it not inconvenient——for my Part I have so perfect a Confidence, both in your Love and Virtue, that I joyfully agree to accept of the precious Moments you are so good to devote to me, and am perswaded I never shall have any Reason to repent it.

O, there is not the least room for doubt on this Occasion, cried he, kissing my Hand a second Time

——I

——— I never can be capable of forgetting what is due to you———the Letter I wrote to you to thank you for the Money you sent, ought to convince you how sensible I am of the Delicacy of your Sentiments and Behaviour———that Moment had I been able I had flown hither to testify my Gratitude at your Feet, and not have trusted to vain Letters, which speak the Mind but by halves, to assure you how entirely I was devoted to you.

Hold my Lord, cried I, interrupting him, no Acknowledgements to one who is so infinitely your Debtor, but satisfy me, if you please, concerning a Letter which you say you wrote, and I have never received.

How! said the Marquis, with a great deal of Emotion, did not Monsieur *Melicourt* send a Packet to you, with a Picture, which I enclosed under a Cover to him, in order that the Place of your Abode might not be known, and sent by a Servant of my own, who went Post on purpose to deliver it to that Gentleman's Hand?

That Servant then, replied I, has betrayed his Trust, for I know *Melicourt* is too exact not to have forwarded it, with all imaginable Expedition. What you tell me, cried the Marquis, both surprizes, and alarms me———there is a Mystery in this Affair, which I cannot comprehend———I remember indeed, that I thought it strange that *Melicourt* sent back my Servant, without writing one single Word to me, and I expressed as much to the Fellow, but he readily told me, that the Gentleman was just going a Journey, and was in haste; but said he would write to me by the Post at his return. Since which I have impatiently expected to hear from him, and indeed through him from you; but no Letter arriving, the Disappointment served to hasten my Journey.———There is something so extraordinary in this Business, continued he, after a Pause, that neglecting one Moment to unriddle it, may be of very ill Consequence———the Servant whom I entrusted with this Letter belongs to me still, and has now the Charge of conducting my Baggage; I'll send one of those I have here directly to the Camp to bring him to me,

that I may force him to confess what he has done with my Letter.

I, who was no less alarmed than the Marquis, as indeed our concern in this Affair was equal, approved of his Design, and hastened the execution of it. He went away directly, but soon returned, and told me he did not doubt, but that the Person he had sent would make an extraordinary Dispatch, in hope of ingratiating himself; on this I could not help asking if his Favourite *Dubois*, had any way offended him, that he came not with him. Not in the least, answered he, but as he has been in the Village, has talked to the Girls, and has a very remarkable Face, I was fearful he might be better remembered than was consistent with the Secrecy which our present Circumstances require, so I left him with the Count *De Saint Fal*, who in his Confinement stands in need of so faithful a Servant.

The Name of Monsieur *De Saint Fal* made me blush, when I reflected how ungrateful I was to defer till now enquiring after so generous and noble a Friend—— I acknowledged my Sentiments on this Occasion very frankly, to him who wholly taking up my Thoughts left no room for any Thing but himself; and he replied in a manner, both becoming the Lover and the Friend, and added, that he would shortly be at Liberty, an exchange of Prisoners being agreed on.

We dined together that Day, and to oblige me I perceived he eat more heartily than could be expected from his Weakness—— I forbore talking of any thing that I thought might give him Disquiet, and always took care to interrupt him whenever he mentioned the old Marquis, and artfully turned the Conversation on some other Topick; he smiled upon me from time to time, as I would not suffer him to speak, and his Looks methought tho' pale and languid, had somewhat Heavenly in them; and certainly nothing can have a greater Resemblance of it on Earth, than where a tender Passion is accompanied by a perfect Innocence.

He was too dear to me for me not to consider every that thing was necessary for the Re-establishment of his Health——

we had no sooner dined then I insisted on his going to lie down, and endeavour to take some repose, protesting that I would not permit him to return till Supper-time.

——He earnestly entreated I would suffer him to stay one Hour longer, but I was not to be prevailed on, and told him I would send my Maid to his Inn to be satisfied, if he complied with what I required:——These little Regards charmed him to the Soul, and he declared at going out of my Chamber, that never till now had he known there were such Joys in Life.

When I was left alone, I indulged myself in the most agreeable Reflections, had it not been for the Letter, which must be either lost or intercepted, my Happiness might have been envied, but as I had already experienced so many ill Effects of Chance, it was natural for me to apprehend this Accident portended me no good——this Notion no sooner gained Ground, than it dissipated by degrees that Harmony which before seemed established in my Mind——the impetuous love the old Marquis had for me, presented a thousand Dangers to my view, and shewed me, that I was still at a greater Distance from my wished for Point, and with which I was so ready to flatter myself.

As I was buried in Meditation on all these Things, I heard a Coach and several Horses stop at the Door——I presently imagined that the old Marquis had discovered where I was, that he was come to surprize his Son and me together, and separate us eternally——I fell into a fit of Trembling, and I know not how far the frightful Idea I was then possessed of, might have transported me, if *Barbara* had not come hastily in to acquaint me, that a very beautiful young Lady, and as fine as a Queen, was come to visit me. I had not Time to think, who this unexpected Guest should be, before *Saint Agnes* appeared——I flew to her, and she by her affectionate Embraces, testified I was no less dear to her, than when we were together in the Convent.

How happy am I, my dear *Saint Agnes*, said I, to see you at Liberty, and that this Change in your Fortune has made no alteration in your Sentiments towards me.

I should make an ill Use, answered that charming Woman, of the favours Heaven has bestowed upon me, if I could be ungrateful to her, who put the first Hand to my obtaining them. After the first Transports were over, and we were seated, I desired she would inform me by what means she had surmounted all the Obstacles, which seemed to be thrown by adverse Fortune, between her and Happiness; to which she immediately yielded.



Sequel of the History of SAINT AGNES.

I NDEED, my lovely Friend, said she, it is but a small Time since I despaired of ever being in the Situation I now am—in spite of all the Interest the Friends of *Mellicourt* could make, our Affair went slowly on, and when through the Remonstrances of my Lord Marquis *De L———V———*, the *Nuncio* seemed inclined to favour us, some unlooked for Accident requiring his return to *Rome*, all was at a stand till a new one should be sent in his Place———this gave my Father time to employ all his Friends to influence the *Cardinal*, who was to succeed the other as *Nuncio* here, on his side; and this succeeded so well, that having been prejudiced by the Accounts sent to him, my Husband found him on his arrival no less our Enemy than my Father. ———I was all this Time kept in Ignorance of what was done, permitted to see none but who were sent by my Parents, and even when there was most probability of the Decision being made in favour of me, told by the Superior and those Nuns, who were gained by my Father, that I ought not to flatter my self with ever living in the World again, and all I should gain by having stirred in the Affair, was, that when all was concluded I should be obliged to undergo a severe Discipline for my little

little regard for these holy Orders, I had once taken upon me.

No Letters from *Melicourt* were now suffered to come to my Hand, and for some Weeks I looked on myself as utterly abandoned both by Heaven and Earth—— I was but very rarely permitted to come near the Grate, and if I did it was in Company with one who they knew would have a watchful Eye over me; it was in one of those Times, however, that a Woman was there offering Oranges to sell, my Companion bought some, but I who am no great admirer of that Sort of Fruit, could not a long Time be prevailed on to be a Customer; at length moved by the poor Creature's Intreaties, who said she had a number of Children, and no way to maintain them, but the Profits of this little Merchandize, I at length drew near the Basket, and being about to make Choice, the supposed Fruiterer, under pretence of giving me one she could recommend, pulled one from the bottom of the Basket, and put it into my Hand, with so significant a Squeeze, that I presently found there was somewhat very extraordinary in this Adventure: I concealed my Surprise, however, put the Orange into my Pocket, paid the Woman, who immediately went away, and I then retired to my Cell, in order to discover if there was any thing supernatural in my Orange or not.

On looking upon it a second Time, I easily perceived it had been cut, and the Rind cemented again, so pressing it between my Hands, it presently flew open, and discovered a Paper, which having unfolded, I saw with no small Transport the Character of my dear *Melicourt*——that faithful Husband, expressed himself in these terms:

To my ever charming, ever dear MI-
NETTA.

TO what Stratagems am I oblig'd to have Recourse, to let you know, that you have a Husband, who in spite of all the Difficulties that surround him, still lives to adore you.—Who thinks of nothing but you—wishes for nothing but you—and fears nothing but that the many Disappointments our Affairs have met with, should press too hard upon your tender Nature ;—but be comforted, my Angel, be comforted—I have obtain'd a Letter from the Duke De E—to the Nuncio, which I flatter myself will have more Weight than all the Interest your inhuman Parents can make against us.—That Prelate gave me a favourable hearing, and seem'd full of Commiseration.—I have his Commands to attend him in eight Days, and bring what Witnesses I can to attest both the Time and Place of our Marriage— if this comes safe to your Hand, as I hope it will, the Bearer who was my Nurse, and who I have placed near the Monastery, will from time to time bring you an Account of my Proceedings, and also let me know how you support yourself under our mutual Afflictions.—Fare-wel, my only dear, believe me to be what I am, and never can cease to be

Your everlasting Admirer, and

most tenderly affectionate Husband,

MELICOURT.

Judge, beautiful *Jeanetta*, continued *Saint Agnes*, how great a Consolation these few Lines afforded me ; I presently wrote an Answer, wherein I laid open all my Soul to this worthy Husband, and the Orange-Woman coming as I expected the next Day to the Grate, I easily found means to slip it into her Hand.—This Communication pass'd undiscovered, and

I received and sent several Letters, all confirming that Affection we had vowed to each other——the time now past more agreeably with me than it had done, and Absence lost the greatest Part of its Irksomeness, by the Imagination that it was very near drawing to Period ; but, alas ! when I most flatter'd myself with my Wishes being accomplish'd, I received News of all *Melicourt's* Endeavours being utterly defeated.——I will not repeat the Letter he wrote to me on that Occasion——it was full of Despair, which even now I shudder but to think upon——the Business of it was to acquaint me, that the Prince *De*——whose Father had received some signal Services from mine, had in Return, took such Part in the Affair, that the *Nuncio* found himself obliged to yield, and had decided in Favour of my Parents.——By this Decree I was not only to continue in the Monastery for Life ; but also to submit to whatever Penance the Church should think my past Crimes demanded. Ah ! cry'd I out, whatever is inflicted on me can be but of short Duration, Death will soon deliver me from my cruel Persecutors. I had scarce finish'd reading this fatal Letter, when the sweet-temper'd *Lindamine* came into my Cell, with Tears in her Eyes, and confirm'd the Tidings it contain'd :——She told me an Order was just arrived, that I should not be suffer'd to come near the Grate any more——be retrench'd even in my Food, and the Hours allow'd for Sleep, moderate as they were before ; and, in fine, that whatever might be looked upon either, as a Pleasure or Convenience denied me.—In fine, the Severity with which I was treated, had certainly no Precedent nor Parallel, and must in good earnest have put an End to my Days had it continued but a very little longer.

But it is the Will of Heaven, the more to shew us on what we should alone depend, to raise or to abase us when we least expect it.——I was now past all Hope, abandon'd to Despair, worn out with Grief and Hardship, my Mind as well as Body weakned and deprest, and waiting, nay, wishing for the Moment of my Dissolution ; when a Chariot with my Mother's Woman in

it, and attended by two Servants on Horseback, came to the Monastery, and having acquainted the Superior, that my Father lay at the Point of Death, and could not expire till he had seen me, I was order'd to obey his Commands, and accordingly went into the Chariot.—So strange a Turn could not but astonish me.—I durst not hope, yet had nothing to fear from it.—Mademoiselle *Bretigny*, now cured of her foolish Passion for the Pilgrim, since she knew he was *Melicourt* and my Husband, assured me that my Father was sincerely grieved at his Usage of me, and resolved to re-unite me to *Melicourt* before his Death.—This she protested to me she had heard him say, and that in the midst of his Agonies, he continually repeating my Name.

Relays being order'd on the Road we soon arrived at the Castle, my Mother met me on the Stair-Case, and after affectionately embracing me, come, my dear *Minetta*, said she, you are at the End of all your Troubles ; but mine are beginning—you are going to receive a dying Father's Blessing, I to lose a Husband—in speaking these Words she led me into the Chamber where my Father lay ; I threw myself on my Knees by his Bedside—the Condition I found him in made me forget all his Cruelty.—I shed Tears of unfeign'd Sorrow, and entreated his Forgiveness for any Action that had occasion'd his Disquiet. You are too good, *Minetta*, replied he, with a feeble Voice, and ask that of me which I deserve not to obtain from you—I am now sensible I have greatly wrong'd you, and cannot resign my Soul in Peace, till I have made Attainment. Then turning to his Valet de Chamber, who attended at the Feet of the Bed, call in the Company, said he, that they may be Witness of what I would have done.

Immediately enter'd Father *F*—his Confessor, two Physicians who attended him, a Surgeon and a Notary Publick ; and when they approach'd near enough to hear his Words, before you all, said, my Father, I acknowledge *Minetta* for my lawful Daughter, and Co-heiress with her Sister Madam *De S*—*B*—of my

my whole Estate——next I absolve her, and hope the Church will do the same, of the Vows I wickedly compelled her to take ; knowing her to be at that same Time the lawful Wife of Monsieur *Melicourt* ; and lastly, I entreat and require of you all who hear this my Acknowledgment, to publish it to the World ; so as that she may be at Liberty to pursue her Duty in her first and voluntary Engagements, and neither she nor her Husband suffer any longer in being separated from each other.——Would Heaven have prolonged my Life to have seen all this performed, I should have died content ;——but since that Blessing is denied me, permit me, however, to depart with the Assurance of your fulfilling in every Article of this my last Will.

My Mother knelt down first, then all the others, and laying their Hands on the holy Ritual, swore to see all he had desired accomplished. I was all this time so confounded between Grief for my Father, and Gratitude for this unlook'd for Tenderneſs, that I had not the power of Speech——I could only testify the Sense I had of it by my Actions. I took his Hand which he held out to bless me, kissed it, and bath'd it in a Flood of Tears ; but as soon as I was able to speak, I poured out my whole Soul in the most ardent Prayer to Heaven, that he might be restored to Health, and live to see what now he was so good as to permit.

Whether it were that the Force he had put upon himself in speaking so much, or that my Prayers had really any Efficacy, I know not, though I scarce dare flatter myself with the latter ; but in that Moment he fell into a Sweat, which before, not all the Recipes given him could procure.——The Physicians observing it, presently pronounced he would recover, which, indeed, he did in a miraculous Manner, being in three Days judged entirely out of Danger.

He imputed his Preservation to my Prayers, and his own Repentance of his late Cruelty to me, and expressed the utmost Impatience to make me as happy as I had been the reverse.——He wrote a Recantation to the *Nuncio* of all he had alledged ; acquainted every

body with this Change in his Sentiments, and gave my patient enduring what he had inflicted on me such Encomiums, as I am in reality far from meriting.

Having some Affairs to finish at Court, before the Ceremony of being re-united to *Melicourt* can be completed, he would needs take me with him; and we are now going to *Versailles*, where by a Letter being apprized of all that has passed, my Husband is to meet us. Thus, my dear Friend, has Heaven at last granted my Prayers, and render'd me more happy by the Addition of my Parents Love, than ever I could have hoped to be.

Here the beautiful *Saint Agnes* gave over speaking, and after having sincerely congratulated her on her good Fortune, I asked where her Father was, that I had not the Honour of seeing him: She told me that he was oblig'd to stop at the House of an old Friend, about half a League distant from the Village; and that she had asked his leave to take this Opportunity of seeing me more at leisure; and also that *Melicourt*, having acquainted her with my late Adventures, and where I was retired, she had prevailed on her Father to pass through the Village of D——; though it was somewhat out of their way to *Versailles*, that she might have the Pleasure of communicating to me her good Fortune, in which she knew I took so much Interest.

I expressed my Acknowledgments to her in the tenderest Manner, and having at her own Request, entertained her with all the Particulars of what had befallen me, since we last saw each other, of which, she said, *Melicourt* had given her but an imperfect Account, is it possible, cry'd she, that at your tender Years, you have had Fortitude enough to support under so many Disappointments? You have reason to hope you are now near the End of your Troubles, and that you will one Day be as happy, as you have hitherto been unfortunate.

—— My Example may serve to convince you, that Patience and a due Confidence in Heaven surmounts the greatest Difficulties.

As much, however, as we were taken up with our own Affairs, neither of us forgot the beautiful *Lindamine*; my lovely Friend gave me such an Account of her Piety, as perfectly charm'd me, and made me wish I could bring myself to the same happy way of thinking; and at once resolve to quit a busy bustling World, where nothing but Vexations seem'd to spring one out of another, and continually distract the Mind attach'd to it. She told me also that *Belizay*, by the Divine Assistance, had truly repented his former Extravagancies, and following the Example of his Mistress, was become a *Carthusian*; since that time, added *Saint Agnes*, *Lindamine* has been perfectly happy; her Days have past over with an uninterrupted Tranquility, and never did Spirit of Devotion, appear in any one with greater Beauty and Sweetness.——Every one in the Monastery admires her, and fortunate do those account themselves, who can boast of being among the Number of those she favours with her Friendship.——I own that the loss of her Society will be always regretted by me, even in the midst of that Happiness I am going to enjoy, nor shall *Melicourt* refuse me the Pleasure of taking a Journey sometimes to visit her.

I joined with her in testifying my Regard for that worthy Nun; but, added I, smiling, I fancy *Mademoiselle De Renneville* is not among the Number of those who are edified by her Example; if I mistake not, you promised, that if ever we were happy enough to meet, you would inform me something of that wild giddy Creature.

I protest, replied, *Saint Agnes*, the thought of her was wholly swallowed up in more deserving Contemplations; but what I have come to the knowledge of concerning her, you shall not be a Stranger to.



The History of Mademoiselle DE REN-
NEVILLE.

YOU remember, my dear, said my lovely Friend, that this young Lady being descended of a Family which had less Wealth than Titles to boast of, she was condemn'd to a Monastick Life, to prevent her marrying beneath the Dignity of her Birth. You know also that feigning herself contented with her Lot, and appearing always chearful, she had greater Liberties allowed her, than was consistent with the Policy of the Place to permit to those, whose Melancholy render'd them more liable to Suspicion——gay and thoughtless as she seem'd, however, all her Thoughts were bent on making her Escape; it was not that she was in love with any one particular Man, that made a Convent so disagreeable; but she hated Confinement, and whoever had made his Addresses to her on the Score of Marriage, would have been well received, because she wish'd for nothing but to live in the World.——As she aim'd, therefore, to attract some Admirer, whenever she was at the Grate, and any Gentlemen in the Parlour, as you know there frequently are, to visit the Nuns, she exerted all her Wit, and made visible every Charm that she thought might gain a Conquest——her Desires at last were crowned with Success; a young *Navarrinan*, who had a Sister in the Convent, was captivated; he made his Addresses, his Sister knowing the Family of Mademoiselle *De Renneville*, imagined that if she were once married, they could not refuse giving her a Dowry; and as she was not a profest Nun, thought she committed no Sacrilege, in forwarding her Escape.

De

Dé Renneville having confest to this young Lady, that she did not disapprove the Passion Monsieur *De Bonville*, for so he was call'd, had for her, they contriv'd a Scheme between them, which had its desired Effect.

One Morning as we were altogether in the Chapel, Mademoiselle *De Renneville* pretended to be seized with a sudden Disorder in her Head——she affected a kind of Delirium at first, and then fell into such violent Fits as frightened all the Convent——proper Remedies were applied, but to no Purpose; and, indeed, she so admirably counterfeited, that it was impossible for any one who saw her, not to believe real what she seemed to suffer——for my Part, though I never had what might be justly termed a Friendship for her, on the Account of the vast Difference of our Humours, yet I sincerely pitied her, and prayed for her Recovery; as did also the pious *Lindamine*, who, though so well skill'd in Physick, was as much deceived as myself.

Her Disorders still encreasing according to all Appearance, Madam the Superior thought proper to acquaint her Parents with it; a Physician who had attended the Family, and was perfectly acquainted with the young Lady's Constitution, was sent to visit her; far from finding out the Fallacy, he pronounced her Condition to be extremely bad, and returned to acquaint Monsieur *De Renneville* her Father, that there must be a Consultation, for in a Disorder such as hers was, he would not presume to prescribe any thing of himself.

This was all our young Projectors wanted: Monsieur *De Bonville* assumed the Physician, and being habited as such, and accompanied by a grave old Matron, who he told the Abbess had been *De Renneville's* Nurse, and was desired now by her Mother to remain with her till the Danger was over, they both had Admittance to the supposed sick Person. The pretended Doctor brought Letters of Credence with him, which were forged for that Purpose, and sign'd by the Names of both *De Renneville's* Parents, so that there was not the least Suspicion of any Deceit in the Affair.

He

278 *The Virtuous Villager; or,*

He visited her twice a Day to give every thing the better Gloss, and the old Woman staid in the Convent, waiting a fit Time to put their Design in Execution. One Evening when we were all at Vespers, except the Portress and one Lay-Sister, *De Renneville* changed Cloaths with the Nurse, and taking a Basket in her Hands, as if going to bring in something necessary for the sick Person, passed the Gates without Suspicion, and got safely to her Lover's Arms, who waited at the End of the Village with a Chaise and Six ready to receive her; as for the supposed Nurse, who had been a Dependant on the Sister of *Bonville*, she quitted the Convent with the same Facility soon after; for being accustomed to go often in and out, the Portress had forgot that the Person she before let pass had not return'd. In fine, nothing of this Matter was discovered till next Morning, when some of the Nuns going in to visit *De Renneville*, and finding the Bed empty, immediately fill'd the Convent with their Cries.

The Superior was no sooner inform'd, than she sent to the Magistrates that diligent Search might be made after the Fugitive; but all who were employed in it return'd without Success, and as we afterwards heard, those they sought for were married at a Neighbouring Town, some Hours before *De Renneville* was missing. Before her Departure she left a Letter for the Abbess upon a Table: It contained, as near as I can remember, these Lines.

*To Madam——Abbess of the Convent of
Augustine's at——*

Madam,

AS I was only compell'd to conform myself to Rules, no way agreeable to my Inclination, I do not think my breaking through them the first Opportunity that offered, stands in any need of an Apology, and, therefore, give you the trouble of this, for no other Reason than to spare you the Pains of any fruitless Search after me: I shall very soon

soon dispose of myself, so as to transfer all power over me, to one who will know how to defend his Right; and think that I less offend Heaven, by answering the End of my Creation, than by continuing in a Life, to which I have no manner of Vocation.

I am not insensible of the Lenity with which I have been treated, while I was under your Care, nor the many kind Offices I have received from the good Sisters I leave behind me.——May you, and them be ever happy in the Lot you chuse, and according to the Charity you profess, pardon the Errors of,

Your most obliged Servant,

DE RENNEVILLE.

It was some Weeks before the Parents of this Lady could be brought to hear of a Reconciliation, nor, perhaps, had so soon consented, had not one of her Sisters died; to whose Dowry, there being no Exceptions to the Husband she had made Choice of, she was at last permitted to succeed. Thus, added *Saint Agnes*, she has fulfilled what she used to tell us her Dreams foretold; and may, perhaps, be more happy than those of a more delicate manner of thinking, a refined Passion being not always the surest Road to Tranquility.

We were moralizing a little on the Temper and Behaviour of the Person, whose Story *Saint Agnes* had been relating, when her Father arrived; I received him in a manner becoming his Rank, and the Friendship I had for his charming Daughter, nor was he less polite in the Compliments he made me.——*Minetta*, said he, has less reason than I imagin'd to regret her Confinement in the Monastery, since by it she obtain'd the Friendship of so amiable a Person as *Mademoiselle Jeannetta*; and as I then intended only to punish her, ought first to have inform'd myself, if there was not a Lady whose Society would render any Place agreeable;——but
Heaven,

280 *The Virtuous Villager ; or,*

Heaven, continued he, was of her side, and turn'd every thing I design'd for Chastisement into Blessings.

He said many other gallant things, and in the short time he staid, which did not exceed half an Hour, discovered enough for me to see, he was not only one of the best bred Men, but also one of the most Sense and Penetration, except the old Marquis *De L——V——*, I had ever seen.

I lamented my want of Convenience to entertain him as I wish'd ; but he assured me, that were there never so good Accommodations in the Village for his Retinue, he could not possibly continue there ; Business of the most urgent Nature calling him with all Expedition to Court, which till I have concluded, said he, my Daughter's Happiness cannot be compleated.

This was a sufficient Reason for me not to press him to stay——the Lady and I parted with mutual Protestations of an eternal Friendship, and Promises of communicating all that befel either of us, worthy the Knowledge of the other.——Monsieur *De——*asked me if I had any Commands for *Versailles* ; but I entreated he would not mention me there on any Account ; and told him it was of the utmost Consequence to my Peace, not to be remembred there : On which both he and his Daughter assured me I might depend upon their Secrecy.

They had left me but a few Moments before the Marquis came ; he had now thrown off his Courier's Habit, and would have appeared perfectly amiable, but for the Patch on his Forehead, which he wore to prevent being known, much larger than he need to have done on the Account of his Wound. He express'd the Tenderness he had for me, in the most passionate Terms that the Heart could dictate or the Tongue pronounce, and discovered an Impatience of being united to me forever, with greater Ardency than I had ever observed in him before.

——My Father's Passion for you, said he, is a Difficulty that seems almost invincible——which way, O! most adorable *Jeanetta*, shall we attempt to conquer it——I could almost wish you were less beautiful, since your Charms have had so unhappy an Influence.

ence on him.——How shall I mention you to him, and entreat a Completion of a Felicity for myself, which must involve him in endless Despair.——Before he loved you, he could only blame my Indiscretion as he term'd it; but now he is become my Rival, will he not expect as his Son, I should recede to him?——Ah! *Jeanetta!*——*Jeanetta!* there is no way to shun the Dangers I apprehend, and save our mutual Tenderness, now on the Brink of being everlastingly overwhelm'd by unrelenting Power.

Though I easily guess'd what way it was he hinted at, and was far from approving it, I made no Reply, because, indeed, I could find no Words immediately which I thought proper to form a Denial to a Lover who deserv'd so greatly of me; I was studying what to say, when he taking my Silence as a favourable Omen to what he had to propose; yes, charming *Jeanetta*, resumed he, the only Expedient that can cut off at once all my Father's Hopes and Expectations is for us to be privately married.——Women, continued he, of the first Rank have had Recourse to it, and we may be above all others excus'd when so strong a Necessity leaves us no other means to avoid the sure Destruction, of all we would preserve in Life.——I will, therefore, contrive it so as——hold, my dear Marquis, cry'd I, interrupting him, as we have begun, and for so long a course of Time, had the strictest Rules of Honour and Decency as Guides to Youth and Passion, let us not now swerve from those faithful Directors; nor by one rash Action tarnish the Glory of our former Conduct.——Clandestine Marriages can never be approved either by Heaven or Earth.——

Doubt you my Honour then, cry'd the Marquis with some Vehemence?——do you believe me capable of deceiving you, or that the Vows I should make to you in the Presence of one Priest, would be less binding than before a thousand Witnesses?——Are you so little acquainted with me, as to suspect I ever can abjure what now I so ardently desire?

No

No, my Lord, answer'd I, my Heart needs no Vouchers for your Sincerity, your Love, your Constancy ;——but yet to agree to the Proposal you do me the Honour to make, would deprive me of that interior Peace, I have ever enjoy'd in the greatest of my Misfortunes——what cannot the Authority of a Father, such as the Marquis *De L——V——* effect ?——might we not, when most we thought ourselves secure, be torn from each other's Arms like *Melicourt* and *Minetta*, or if it should not happen so, must I not live in the continual dread of it ?——The Happiness of being yours, is too precious to be blended with Tears, frightful Apprehensions, and Uncertainty of preserving it.——What ever happens, added I, pressing his Hand, you will be ever dear to me ; and if I am so unfortunate as to be separated from you, I shall at least have the Consolation of having contributed nothing to my own Wretchedness.

The Marquis fetch'd several deep Sighs while I was speaking ; but, as his Reason could not but convince him I was in the right, he told me he would insist no farther on a thing to which I seem'd so averse. I thank'd him for this Proof of his Complaisance, and shewed the Sense I had of it, by all the innocent Caressees possible. I must have Patience then, cry'd he, charm'd with my endearing Behaviour.——I will wait, my lovely *Jeanetta*, provided you reserve for me that Heart on which all my Happiness depends, and also keep your dear Person so well concealed that it be not forced from me——'tis possible that Time and Absence may abate my Father's Passion for you, and he no longer oppose my Desires ;——but if those Hopes prove vain, I want but three Months of being at Age, and then the Law makes me my own Master, and I may dispose of my Hand as Reason and Inclination joined in one, commands.

Ah, my Lord ! cry'd I, you say this, but to make tryal of me——I have too high an Idea of your Virtue, to believe you will have recourse to Methods, too frequently, indeed, made use of ; but such as destroys all
Duty

Duty and Gratitude to Parents.———Rather let the unhappy *Jeanetta* drag on her lonesome Days in an eternal Banishment from all that's dear to her, than suffer the justly valued Object of her Soul to come to such Extremities.———No, continued I, never will I yield to any thing that should make you become a Criminal———win over a Father, who merits all your Esteem, and who is only cruel in opposing an Inclination he has many Reasons to disapprove, and by a long and uninterrupted Series of Obedience deserve he should at last consent to your Desires———these are the only Means I approve of, for engaging the Compliance of a Parent, all others are highly blameable, and inconsistent with the Dictates of Nature as well as Religion.

I utter'd this with an uncommon firmness of Voice and Deportment, the Marquis look'd at me with Astonishment, and when I had ended; charming Creature! cry'd he, is it possible that to the most Angelick Form, there should be joined such Wit, such Prudence, such an Understanding, and above all such a Dignity of Sentiments, which though opposite to my Designs, fill me with the extremest Reverence———you are not to be loved as Woman, but adored as something Divine.———O! all my Hopes are vain, my Father must have observed this in you as well as I, and never can be prevail'd upon to relinquish such a Treasure, even though it costs him the Life of an only Son!

This Exclamation soothed my Vanity too much———I would not suffer him to proceed, but entreated him to forbear, and protested to him I had no Ambition, but to acquit myself of the Duty I owed to Heaven, and to please him, and deserve the Continuance of his Love.

The Marquis, after kissing my Hand with a mixture of Passion and Respect, was going to make some Reply, when the Valet de Chamber, whom he had sent to the Camp, came hastily into the Room, his Master express'd the utmost Surprise, at seeing him return, and asked him hastily what had prevented his prosecuting the Journey he had ordered him to undertake. What I have

have to inform your Lordship, replied he, will make you sensible it was needless——happening to call at an Inn about ten Miles distant from this Place, I saw the Servant your Lordship sent me to, talking with the Man of the House: He no sooner perceived me, than he took immediate Flight, I pursued him, with all imaginable Speed, till he took shelter in a Wood, where judging it impossible to find him, I returned to the House, hoping to inform myself on what Business he came there; and was told that he had not arrived above ten Minutes before I came, and had enquired if a Chaise attended by three Servants had pass'd that way. This was enough to make me know, that he is endeavouring to discover which way your Lordship took, so thought I could do no better than to return and acquaint you with it.

The Marquis on hearing this no longer doubted but that he was betrayed, that his Father was in Possession of his Letter, and also acquainted with his Journey. It was easy also to see, that this Traitor of a Servant was order'd to find out to what Place he was gone, as the surest means of discovering where I lay conceal'd.

After some Reflections on this perplexing Affair, the Question was how to behave, as it was not to be doubted but the old Marquis would have the Pursuit continued, there was little Probability his Son could long escape it; so that we both agreed it was highly necessary for him to depart;——but this, a'as, was more easily resolved than executed——we had been too long absent to endure to be separated again so suddenly——we talk'd of it that whole Evening——the same the next Morning when he came to me again——that whole Day pass'd over, a second, and a third also were taken up in tender Adieus, yet still he did not go.——The Evening before that, in which he was determined to quit the Village, we went to enjoy the Benefit of the Air, after the Heat of the Day was over, in a little Wood about half a Mile from our House: Nature never formed a more delightful Place than this, a fine Stream ran through the midst of it, near which there were several

several Groves so thick, and the Trees so well ranged, that they defended equally from the Sun and Rain, or any other Annoyance from the Firmament——a thousand Nightingales perched upon the Boughs, and regaled the Ear with their melodious Notes——every thing was ravishing about us, and inspired Love and Tenderness——it was here we gave and received all the Proofs of mutual Love that Virtue could desire, or Innocence bestow——we were in this pleasing Entertainment when we heard the trampling of a Horse pretty near us, and presently after heard a Man enquire the Road to the Village of *D*——, and how far off it was. At first we thought he had been speaking to some Person he had met with on the Road; but on his calling out, and repeating the same Questions, without any Answer being given him; alas! said the Marquis, this is some some Stranger who has lost his way, and finds no body to direct him——and presently stepp'd forward; and told the Man which way he should go. The Stranger seem'd overjoyed, and having thank'd him, asked him if he were of the Village? Yes, replied the Marquis in a feign'd Voice, who now had his own Reasons for this Deception. Then, said the other, did not an Officer of Distinction come here three or four Days ago in a Chaise, attended by three Servants? If you can inform me whether he continues here, or if gone, which Road he took, I will reward you handsomely.——You are very lucky, answered the Marquis, to meet with me, because no-body could have given you so good an Intelligence.——The Person you mean lodges at my House, is he not a tall young Man with black Eyes, wears a large Patch over half his Forehead, and has long curled Hair?——You are right, said the Man, and pray what does he pretend is his Business here.——Nay, as to that, replied my Lover, it is none of my Business to ask any Questions; but there is a very pretty young Woman, that they say, has brought him down here.—Tell you the Truth, added he, lowering his Voice, and drawing nearer, they are together now in this Wood——I have been listening to their Conversation, and if you have

have any Curiosity, you need only alight, and follow me to be convinced.

I knew very well by all that had been said, that this was no other than the unfaithful Servant, who had given us so much Concern, and was terrified beyond Measure, lest the Marquis in the first Emotions of his Rage should dispatch the Wretch ; who immediately dismounting on what his Master said, he seized him by the Throat, and no longer disguising his Voice, I have you, Villain, cry'd he, and at the same time drew his Sword, confess or die this Instant. — I screamed out at these Words, fear nothing, Madam, continued the Marquis, and then turning to the Man, own the Truth, said he, and I, perhaps, may pardon what you have done against me.

The Traitor finding who it was that spoke to him, seem'd quite thunderstruck, and fell at his Feet begging he would spare his Life : Speak then, continued the Marquis, I promise to forgive you if you conceal nothing of what you have done against me ; but if you again deceive me expect no Mercy. The Servant who knew very well he might depend upon his Master's Word, inform'd him, that he was drawn in, and corrupted by the old Marquis's Gentlemen.—What *Forſan*, cry'd the Marquis ? 'Tis false——my Father has discharged him his Service.—It was in order to make his Peace again, replied the Man, that as soon as he heard Madam *De Roches* had left *Paris*, he bethought him, knowing his Lord's Passion for her, of using all his Endeavours to find out the Place of her Retreat.——He was certain, he said, that there was a Correspondence between your Lordship and the Lady, and could not fail of discovering where she was, provided he could intercept one of your Letters.

On this Project he came to the Camp in a very private manner, and unfortunately pitch'd upon me as his Instrument in the Affair. Not only because I am his Countryman, and was also formerly his Servant ; but also because it was through his Recommendations, I obtain'd the Honour of being in my Lord's Family. After calling all this to my Remembrance, he told me

what

what had happened to him, and that if I would assist him in the Execution of a Scheme he had form'd for getting his Pardon, and at the same time being reveng'd on the Lady, who had occasion'd his Disgrace, he would not only give me an immediate Recompence, but also make my future Fortune. He found me, alas! but too much disposed to come into his Measures, and acquainted me with his Contrivance; which was to keep always as near your Person as possible, to be more assiduous and diligent about you than any other of the Servants; to the end I might gain some share in your Confidence, and when you wrote any Letters to be entrusted with them, which instead of delivering according to your Orders, I was to put immediately into his Hands.

I obeyed all the Injunctions he gave me but too well: And when your Lordship commanded me to go to *Paris*, went no farther than a small Town not five Miles from the Camp, where he lay concealed expecting to hear from me.—He was transported with Joy when he read the Letter you had entrusted me with—this is all I wish'd, cry'd he, I am now certain of retrieving my Lord's Favour, and, perhaps, a greater Portion of it than ever. He was not deceived in this Hope, we went together to *Verfailles*, where the old Marquis then was, and he had no sooner wrote to him, that he was arrived and had News of Madam *De Roches* to impart, than he had Admittance and was restored to his Place; it was resolv'd I should return to your Lordship with the Answer I brought, and continue to intercept your Letters, in order to discover where the Lady was, which you did not mention in the Packet you sent by me.

But your sudden Departure from the Army disconcerted all the Measures that had been agreed upon, especially, as your Lordship did not take me with you; all I could do was to acquaint Monsieur *Forfan* with it, and what Road the Equipage, with which I was left, was to take. The next Day after we set out, a Footman belonging to the old Marquis met me, with a Letter from Monsieur *Forfan*, ordering me to quit the Baggage, and endeavour by all the Means I could to discover what

Road

Road you had taken ; with a Promise that if I could find out Madam *De Roches* by it, he would provide for me in the hardſomeſt manner all the Days of my Life.

———This, my Lord, was the Inducement of purſuing you with ſo much Diligence, and of my flying when accidentally met by your Valet de Chamber. I doubted not but you had diſcovered my Infidelity, and knowing myſelf loſt with you, renewed my Enquiries more zealouſly than ever.——I ſuffer'd no Town nor Village to eſcape me, between the Camp and this, where your Lordſhip has ſurprized me ;——but Heaven to puniſh my Perſidy has render'd all my Hopes fruſtrate.

——I am in your Lordſhip's power——diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe ; but I hope you will ſhew Mercy to a poor Wretch, who has ſuffered himſelf to be corrupted by fine Promiſes and Hopes of a Settlement for Life ; and who beſides all this, was really informed, that what they wanted me to do was wholly for your good, and to break off an Affair, which Monſieur *Forſan* ſwore to me, would ſooner or later end in your Deſtruction, and which the old Marquis was determin'd to prevent, if poſſible, at any Rate.

The Fellow ended theſe Words, with throwing himſelf a ſecond time at his Maſter's Feet, and wept ſo bitterly, that I could not forbear interceding in his Behalf.——I will keep my Word with him, Madam, ſaid the Marquis, and ſpare his Life, with this Proviſo, that he never more comes into my Sight.——Prudence, however, obliges me to ſecure him till I am got Home again, and you are diſpoſed of in ſome other Place, to prevent any farther Effects of his Treachery. Ah, my Lord, cry'd the Man, I ſwear by all that is holy, that if your Lordſhip vouchſafes to give me your Pardon, I will make no other Uſe of it, than to repair the Fault I have committed.

There was ſomewhat in his Behaviour, that had ſo much the Air of a true Penitent, that it moved me very much, and I pleaded for him with all the Earneſtneſs I was able——the Marquis paus'd a little after I had done ſpeaking ; but when he had well weigh'd the

Business in his Mind——this, said he, is the only Request in which I either can, or ought to refuse you——to put it in the Power of a Person who has once betrayed my Confidence, to deceive me a second time, is being a worse Enemy to myself than he can possibly be, and is what I have laid down as a Maxim never to be guilty of;—but to shew you how ready I am to comply as far as is consistent with Discretion, though I cannot suffer him about myself, I will be no hindrance to his being provided for with another Master.—— Take then my Pardon, continued he, and with it something to support your Expences, till you get into Service. With these Words he gave him four *Lewis D'Ors*; and added, his Thanks were due to me, whom he design'd so cruelly to injure. After this the Fellow retired full of Grief, and I believe unfeign'd Repentance; and we return'd Home making various Reflections on this Adventure.

The next Day the Marquis forced himself, pursuant to the Resolution he had taken, to quit the Village of D——; how difficult both of us found it to part, would be a Task for the most fluent Pen to paint—all the Courage, all the Fortitude I could call to my Assistance, was scarce sufficient to enable me to support the Grief, with which I was overwhelm'd.—— Remember, said I, embracing him with the utmost Tendernefs, remember on your Fidelity depends my Fate.——Alas! replied he, is it possible for me to live without adoring you!——great as our Disappointments are——invincible as the Bars between our mutual Wishes seem, there is a Pleasure even in suffering for you, beyond what all the World without it could bestow.——While absent from you I both see and hear you, your dear Idea is so strong upon my Faculties, that I converse with you as when present.——O! love me with the same Fervour, and we neither of us can be truly unhappy.

It would be too tedious to repeat the hundredth Part of the soft endearing Expressions we made use of to each other; so I shall only say, that instead of going in the Morning as he intended, they took up so much time

that it was near five in the Evening before we separated——at last he threw himself into his Chaise, and gave me so tender an Adieu with his Eyes, that mine gush'd forth a Flood of Tears in spite of my Endeavours to restrain them. The Country People, who were gather'd about the Chaise, as every thing surprizes in a Village, were Witnesses of our Parting, and I could hear them say, this is being like Brothers and Sisters, indeed;——how fond they are of one another.

Had not my Heart been too much oppress'd, I should not have forborn laughing at the Simplicity of these poor People, though at the same time it shewed their own want of Guile, not to suspect it in others.——They took the Marquis for my Brother, because they were told he was so, and to be able to penetrate too deeply, is not always the most laudable Qualification.

My dear Marquis was no sooner gone, than I shut myself up in my Closet and gave the full Scope to my Tears and Lamentations——when, cry'd I, shall I see again this Lover so truly worthy of all the Affection I have for him?——What will be the Event of so tender, and so unfortunate a Passion?——Are we never to meet without our Felicity being embittered with the Thoughts of Parting?——The old Marquis came next into my Head, enraged as he is, at my absenting myself, said I, how know I but he may compel his Son to reveal to him where I am, or if not so, some other means may betray the Place of my Retirement.——Perhaps, when I least expect him he may appear——may accost me with Fury in his Heart and Eyes——may say, take your Choice, *Jeanetta*, either my Bed or a Cloyster is your Doom——it is in vain for you to depend upon my Son, he can afford you no Assistance, nor ever shall be yours.——You ought to tremble at having so far incensed me, as it is in my Power to make you both pay dearly for the Advantage, he has gained of me in your Affection.

These Imaginations were so strong and lively that I fell into a Fit of Trembling, as if what my Fears suggested were already come.——I believe, my Reader will

will shortly have Reason to think they were a kind of Prognostick, of what was shortly to happen to me: I check'd myself, however, and endeavoured not to give way to them, but in vain——I went to my Devotions, yet still they mingled with my Prayers.——Heaven, alas! was deaf to my Entreaties, nor could a Heart attach'd as mine was at that time to worldly Objects, expect Assistance from above. To merit Divine Consolation, one ought to be ashamed of that Weakness I too much indulged; so that left entirely to myself, Tears and Complaining were all the Relief I could find, in the Oppressions I then labour'd under.

The End of the ELEVENTH PART.





THE
VIRTUOUS VILLAGER,
OR,
VIRGIN'S VICTORY.

P A R T. XII.



THREE Days from that of the Marquis's departure, I passed in little else than Tears; but then the expectation of receiving a Letter from him, with an Account of what I had to hope or fear from his Father, gave some trace to my Melancholy, but none arriving either by the Post, or any particular Messenger, I re'ap'd into my former Sadness, with this additional Cause, that somewhat very extraordinary must have happened, which could occasion a Delay in what he knew must be so necessary, not only for my Peace of Mind, but also for the regulating my Conduct, as to removing from, or continuing in the Village where I was.

My

My Father, Mother, and good Aunt were much troubled at the unusual Pensiveness they observed in me, and omitted nothing which they imagined might divert me,——but all their Attempts were unsuccessful, even Reading, my favourite Amusement, had no longer any Charms for me, my Thoughts were too perplexed to suffer me to give any Attention to what I had no immediate Concern in, and even those Books of Devotion, in which the pious Souls of the Composers were poured out in fervent Ejaculations, failed of inspiring me with those Sentiments, which in reality could only have afforded me that Serenity I stood so much in need of.

A whole Week was now elapsed, I had no News, and began to grow impatient, and almost wild with the various Perturbations of my Mind——Good God! would I often cry out, what can have happened!——what Accident so dreadful that my Lover should fear to inform me of——I was walking hastily about my Apartment, the Agitations of my Mind, rendering my Body no less restless, when my Mother came hastily into the Room, to tell me that a Chaise and Six with a Gentleman in it, desired to speak with me. As my Apprehensions of the old Marquis were always in my Head, I concluded it was he, and was ready to faint away; I recovered myself, however, and desired he might be brought in; but what I endured in that Interval is not to be expressed.

But how were my Fears converted into Pleasure, when I saw instead of him I imagined, the Valet de Chamber of my Lover, the faithful *Dubois* came into my Chamber, and presented a Letter to me: Heavens! cried I, is it possible that after the Apprehensions the Marquis and I were under of your being seen here, that he should venture to send you? I have taken a sure Precaution to prevent being known, said he, shewing me a false Nose, which it seems he had worn till he came into my Room, this Nose would disguise me to my own Father; so that there is nothing to be feared on that side,——would to Heaven, continued he, I could as easily reconcile you to the News I bring——

O, Heavens! cried I, earnestly, what has happened? Read, Madam, rejoined he, and you will then be judge whether my Lord Marquis could properly send any other Person than myself on a Business which will require all your Fortitude to sustain.

So dreadful a Preparation might very well alarm me, Heavens, cried I, what new Disaster!——what Ills has Fate now prepared for the unfortunate *Jeanetta*!——the Seal broke open I found what I cannot even now reflect on, without shivering——Grief sure was never mortal, for if it had I could not have survived the reading this Epistle.

To mine no more, the fatally enchanting
JEANETTA.

WHAT shall I say, O, thou too lovely Creature! how express the Situation of my Heart! Grief! Horror! Desperation! Madness are all Words too poor to give you any just Idea of it——Fate, exquisite in Cruelty, is not content to render me the most wretched of Mankind, without compelling my own Hand to give the Blow, which forever sinks me from my hopes——yes, *Jeanetta*, it is so ordained, that I must use all the Power I have over you, to engage you to think of me no more——to banish me entirely from your Heart——that Heart which to obtain I have done and suffered so much——This I must do, or forfeit all Title to better Fortune——let me than rather be miserable than merit to be so——but, why do I keep you in suspense? the dreadful Riddle must be at last explained——Take it then in few Words——My Father lies at the point of Death, brought to this Extremity by you and me——your Name is ever in his Mouth——he calls for you——and says he shall expire in Peace, if he carries to the Grave the Name of your Husband——can I be a Son, and not do every thing in my power to preserve so precious a Life, as that of a Parent's——

if

if I am so unhappy as to lose him, let me not reproach myself, with being the horrid Cause of his Death——the Name of Parricide, is what I cannot bear——if ever therefore I was dear to you, save him who gave me Being——even now his last Agonies seem approaching——hast then, O most excellent of thy Sex! ——a Minute's delay may make the Succour you would bring too late, and render me the most guilty, as well as most wretched of Mankind——

Tours, as far as I now dare to call myself,

L——V——

What is it to me, cried I, bursting into Tears, let the cruel Parent die——am I to be punished for the Fury of his Passion, and the Condition to which it has reduced him!——Rigid Heaven! am I preserved for this——why was I born with these destructive Charms——why endued with a Soul capable of distinguishing what real Happiness is, if I must be plunged into the Depth of Misery?——as I spoke this, my Grief so overwhelmed me, that had not *Dubois* supported me I must have fainted away.

The Marquis doubtless had foreseen to what a Condition his Letter would reduce me, and gave his Valet de Chamber a Phial, whose rich Elixir restored me to myself——alas! said I to *Dubois*, why would you not suffer me to die——why apply this barbarous Relief——like a Wretch condemned to expire in Torments, you strengthen me only to prolong my Pain.

Tho' *Dubois* by the Knowledge he had of my Love for his Master, might be supposed to be pretty well prepared for such a Scene, yet was he so dejected at it, that he was scarce able to utter any thing for my Consolation——at last, in the Name of all that's dear to you, Madam, said he, endeavour to bear up against this unexpected Blow——think to what a Condition it has reduced my Lord, and how dearly he pays for his Discharge of his Duty——should he see

your Griefs——what would become of him? O, it is that which overthrows all my Fortitude, replied I, did I suffer alone, Death would soon put a Period to my Sorrows; but the Considerations of my dear Marquis's Deſpair retards my fleeting Life——what would indeed become of this faithful Lover, if he should be told I was killed by the Injunſtion he laid upon me?——Yes, cried I, after a ſhort Pauſe, to comply with his Deſires, to make him eaſy, in the cruel Sacrifice he makes of what is deareſt to him, I muſt not only preſerve the Life of his Father, but my own——He ſhall be obeyed——

My Sighs for ſome Time intercepted the Paſſage of my Words; but ſuppreſſing them with all my Might, ——let us go, cried I, the Marquis ſhall know how extenſive his Power is over me——I deſigned myſelf for him, myſelf was all the Preſent I had to make him, and for a long time he has been Maſter of me——he may diſpoſe his own——I will not offer to reſiſt——by acting in this manner I ſhall at leaſt prove, that tho' I am infinitely inferior to him in Birth, I am not at all ſo in noble Sentiments, and any Example he can ſet I ſhall never want Reſolution to imitate.

What a Dignity of Mind do you make known, Madam, cried *Dubois* with Tears in his Eyes:——a way of Thinking ſuch as yours is worthy of a Throne, ——none that truly know you can be aſtoniſhed at that Exceſs of Paſſion you excite——ah! would to Heaven you were as fortunate as I am ſure you ought to be!

I was too much overwhelm'd with Affliction to make any Reply to theſe Words, nor had even my Vanity, which I have a thouſand times acknowledged was my predominant Foible, any Dominion over me in this dreadful Criſis. I called for *Barbara*, and ordered her to pack up my Things immediately for my Journey——Ah, Heavens! are we going to leave *D*——then! cried ſhe; perhaps we are, ſaid I, with more Sternneſs than I had ever ſpoke to her before, it's not your Buſineſs to enquire but to obey. The good Creature was ſilent on
this;

this ; but went about doing as I had commanded, tho' I believe with a very akeing Heart.

My Designs were no sooner known, than every one was in Tears—what must we lose this charming Lady, cried my Mother ? I hope, rejoined my Father, who happened to be at home, it is not through any Fault of ours ? no, no, answered I, on the contrary, I leave you with a regret, which at present you are not able to conceive——an indispensable, a cruel Necessity tears me from you——I should have thought myself blest to have past all my Days in this peaceful innocent Obscurity ; but a Mandate I am bound to obey, leaves me not the Mistress of my Inclinations.——

As I spoke these Words, I took my Mother in my Arms and tenderly embraced her, my Father out of Respect drew back ; but I flew to him, and throwing myself upon his Neck, permit me, said I, to testify how dear I am to you——a little Time perhaps will shew I do but my Duty.

After this I got into my Chaise, leaving my Parents very much astonished, especially my Father, whose very Soul was touched at my endearing Behavior : My Aunt jumped in after me, as fond as she was of her Village, and cried, she would leave all that was dear to her in the World to follow me ; on which I kissed her by way of Acknowledgment ; just as we were driving away, my Mother asked me what she should do with the Goods I had left behind——keep them, cried I, stretching out my Hand to her, whither I ever Return to you or not, all I have is yours, both through Gratitude and Duty.

I could not hear what Answer she made, the Chaise at that Instant began to be in Motion, but doubtless my Words were as surprizing as the Hurry in which I went away. *Dubois*, whose Orders were to make all possible Expedition, hastened the Postilion, and all the Post-Houses having notice, the Relays were in such readiness, that we did not lose a Moment.

I was all the Time buried in the most profound Melancholy, which *Dubois* perceiving as he rode by the

side of the Chaise, begged of me to conquer my Affliction as much as possible, and told me, that if the young Marquis should be sensible of half the Grief he saw me in, he could not answer but that it would be fatal to him.

I loved with too disinterested an Affection not to do every Thing that might contribute to the ease of that dear Man, and assured *Dubois*, I would use my utmost Efforts to stifle my Sighs, my Tears, and all that should denote Distress, which was the utmost could be expected from me.

My poor Aunt, who heard all this without being able to comprehend the Meaning of it any farther, than that something had happened to give me Disquiet, cried every Moment, bless me, I wonder any body can have the Heart to vex so good a Lady; but I will pray so heartily to God for you, that I am sure you will be rid of every thing that troubles you at last.

How well, thought I, does the Simplicity of this good Creature remind me of my Duty! it's to Heaven alone, we ought to have recourse in our Calamities——it's Heaven alone can relieve us.——Vain are our own Endeavours——vain the Consolation that human help affords!

The Relays all the Way were so exact, that the Speed we made was incredible, Day was but just withdrawn when we arrived at *Paris*; but there are some periods in Life, when every thing goes wrong, and makes it seem as if Misfortunes of every kind combined to our Vexation. *Dubois* was so eager in hastening the Postilion, that in his hurry he drove against a Coach and overturned it, just as we passed by the Opera-House, which breaking one of our Wheels obliged us to stop: The Shrieks of the Women in the Coach drew together a hundred Flambeaux, and a vast Crowd of People, so that every thing that passed was as plainly to be seen as at Noon-Day——*Dubois* had left me sitting in the Chaise, in order to go and bring a Chair——while he was gone, the Footmen belonging to the Coach that had received this Injury, fell upon my Postilion, the Fellow
unable

unable to make his Party good against so many roared out for help; his Cries drew still more People about us, and the Confusion was so great, that *Barbara* and myself were terrified to that Degree that we were ready to faint away; but my Fright soon gave way to my Vexation—I was looking earnestly for *Du Bois* to return, when the Duke *De*——unluckily going to the Opera knew me from his Coach, and called out to his Servants to stop——make up to that Chaise, cried he, and prevent the Lady from coming to any hurt by this Accident——she is my Acquaintance, and a Woman of Quality.

Not all the Danger I was in, seemed half so much a Misfortune as the meeting this Nobleman, and would much rather have remained in it, than owed my Assistance to a Person, from whose Love or Gallantry my dear Marquis had suffered so much——besides, I knew not what Discoveries the real *Madam De Roches*, might have made after I was gone, nor what I should reply in case, when this Bustle should be over, any Questions should be asked me concerning my having assumed that Name.

The Duke's coming up drew the Eyes of the whole Crowd upon me; but, good Heavens, how was I alarmed, when the Ladies being by this Time, with much ado dragged out of the Coach, which lay quite turned over, I saw that one of them was *Madam D'Esival*, that *Mademoiselle D'Elbieux*, by whose Malice I had been brought into so many Troubles——what would I not have given to have been any where but where I was!——I pulled my Hood over my Face to prevent her knowing me; but she had already got a Glimpse of my Face, and was no less quicksighted than myself? what, said she, to her Servants, and the People about her, is that the Chaise that has offered me this Insult, and being answered in the affirmative, and has that infamous little Wretch escaped till now the Punishment of all the Mischiefs her Artifices have occasion'd——is she still at Liberty, and has the Impudence to affront a Woman of Quality?——drag her Headlong from the Chaise

into the Kennel, added she, to her Servants——there is no Usage bad enough for her.

'Tis easy to imagine what I felt on this Occasion, and how I looked at the approach of four Footmen with their Flambeaux; but a Protector was not wanting——The Duke having quitted his Coach, came running with his Servants, and drew his Sword——let me see who dare come near this Chaise, said he——this Lady is my Acquaintance, and whoever has the Insolence to molest her, shall repent it. These Words, and the Knowledge who it was that spoke them, made the Footmen of Madam *D'Esival* draw back——Here the Affair might possibly have ended, had not the too courageous *Dubois* came that Instant up, and seeing the Danger I was in, began to lay about him with his Whip, on which they all turned upon him with their Flambeaux, the Duke's Men took his Part, and had it not been for the Guards, who some were prudent enough to call, a great deal of Mischief must have ensued—the Duke, who took this Opportunity to give me a Proof of his Passion, had engaged in the Fray himself, but the Officer on Duty appearing, the Tumult abated, and the Duke entreating him in a very polite Manner, to assist in conveying me to his Coach, which he said was waiting for me, he came to offer me his Hand for that Purpose; when Madam *D'Esival*, perceiving I was likely to get away, called out to him, what are you about Monsieur, said this cruel Woman, would you protect, and hinder me from punishing a sawcy Wretch, who out of meer Malice pulls over my Coach, and insults me in the Face of the World!——there are a hundred Witnesses to swear this, 'tis unjust to protect a little mean Creature, after such a Behaviour, and have no regard to the Remonstrances of a Woman of Quality——the Officer surpris'd at these Reproaches, and knowing she was indeed a Woman of Rank, turned towards her, and told her, that it was not for him to decide the Matter——that he only did his Duty in preventing Mischief——that my Chaise was broke down, and it was but just

to help me out of it; and that I was a Person of Distinction too——

How! cried Madam *D'Estival*, of Distinction!—— you are imposed upon Monsieur——the Wretch is the Daughter of a poor Wood-Cutter in the Forest of *Fountainbleau*, and Tenant to the late Count my Father.

The Duke *De*——who was so persuaded that I really was what I had pretended to be, that I believe he would have lost his Life in the Defence of his Opinion, cried out, it was very unbecoming to have recourse to Calumny, in order to gain a Point; that he knew me very well, and that there was not one Word of Truth in all she had alledged. Besides, said he, appealing to the People, why should this Lady be blamed for the Carelessness of her Postilion!——'tis easy to see she is the Person most frightened at the Accident, and instead of using her ill, every body ought in Honour to give her what Assistance she stands in need of—but I am not much surprized, continued he, in an Air of Ridicule, at the Ill-nature which would subject her to every kind of Misfortune——you see she is extremely handsome, and that is a Crime never to be pardoned by Ladies of a certain turn of Mind.

This extraordinary Conclusion set every body into a loud Fit of Laughter——they turned their Eyes first on me, then on Madam *D'Estival*, and then on me again——a general Murmur was heard in my favour, ——a hundred Arms instead of one——a hundred Coaches were offered to receive me——all now went wonderfully for me, but I was destined to undergo one more Mortification yet before I could get rid of this Adventure.

Publick Entertainments at *Paris*, and I believe every where else, bring People together, who otherwise perhaps never would have met. My ill Stars decreed it so, that the true Countess *De Roches* was that Night at the Opera——the Stop of Coaches I had so innocently occasioned, prevented her coming out, and enquiring, as it was natural, the Reason of this Disturbance, and the
Names

Names of the Ladies, for whose different Interests there had been a kind of Parties made, one of the Duke's Servants unfortunately happened to be near her, and answered, that as to one of the Ladies he did not know her, but the other was Madam the Countess *De Roches*.

——How ! said she, to two Ladies who were with her, this Accident is odd enough——this is certainly the Woman, who took my Name upon her, and received that Bounty from the King, which I ought to have had——I'll have her apprehended upon the Spot, if she escapes now, I may make as many fruitless Enquires after her as I have done.

While this Conspiracy was forming against me, and which I heard nothing of ; they were helping me out of the Chaise: the Duke *De*——took hold of my Hand, and would have obliged me to go into his Coach ; but *Dubois* whispered something to his Grace, on which he answered, that is very true, and then led me to another, which I saw had the Marquis's Livery, we were just going to drive away, when a Voice cried out, stop——stop the fictitious Countess *De Roches* !——*Dubois*, who had heard something of this, tho' I had not, had jumped into the Coach with me, and putting his Head out of the Door, bid the Coachman to drive as fast as he could, and regard nothing——this Direction saved me, it was executed with such Rapidity ; to the Misfortune of all the Carriages that stood in our way, the Horses unused to the Whip, now feeling it, bore down every thing they met, and whirled me from this Disaster, which otherwise might have proved of very ill Consequence to me.

It was near Eleven however, when I reached the old Marquis's House: all his People stood ready to receive me as I alighted from the Coach, eager and curious to see a Person so remarkable by her present Circumstances ; the young Marquis himself waited for me in a Gallery ; he looked pale, wan, dejected, and as a Man quite born down with Affliction——the Disorder of his Dress, and even his very Hair bespoke the Trouble of his Soul——with a Sigh, which seemed to rend

his

his Heart, he took me by the Hand, and tenderly pressed it; but had not power to utter one Word, tho' I perceived he more than once attempted it—I was in the same Condition, fain would I have spoke something to convince him of the greatness of the Sacrifice I was going to make him; but I was deprived of Voice, and thus in the most perfect Attitudes of dumb Sorrow, did we pass thro' several large Rooms before we came to the Marquis's own Apartment.

We arrived at length at the fatal Door, it was so dark, that I could distinguish nothing at entering, but two Wax Candles, whose feeble Glimmering, was half obscured by the Shade of a Screen. The Marquis squeez'd my Hand a second Time, sigh'd again, and having led me into the Middle of the Room, left me there, and went to his Father's Bed-side;—my Lord, cried he, in a faltering Voice, the beautiful *Jeanetta* is come to offer herself to you—she will no longer oppose the Honour you design her—shall she approach?—a low Voice, like that of a Person whose latest Moment was arrived, answered, what say you, Son?—the Marquis attempted to repeat what he had said; but his inward Agonies would not permit him, and all he could do was to make a Sign to *Forfan*, who was waiting, to perform that Office for him.

The old Marquis no sooner seemed to understand what they were saying to him, than he cried out in a Voice somewhat louder than before—Son, I am satisfied—and then remained silent.

My dear Marquis, who had been struggling with his Griefs, had now gathered Courage enough to ask him if he would not see me—I fear, replied he, I have not Strength sufficient to bear it—however let her approach. I did so, trembling and almost dying at every Step, the Marquis took my Hand, and presented it to his Father, who called for a Light, but when one was brought, seemed unable to bear the glare of it, and had then remove it again—it is enough, said he, I see I am not deceived, it is indeed *Jeanetta* herself:

he

he said no more, but appeared deep in Thought, during which he cast his Eyes sometimes on me, and sometimes on his Son alternately.

We all were in a profound Silence for some time, the young Marquis was the first that broke it, and testifying the Conquest he had gained over himself, well my Lord, said he, in a more intelligible Voice, how do you find yourself?——will not the Sight of a Person so dear to you give some happy turn to your Distemper? Alas! cried he, it is too much——I have not Spirits to support the Joy——then addressing himself to me, you have spoke nothing to me, O too charming *Jeanetta*! —— I fear your coming hither is an Affliction to you. No, my good Lord, replied I with a Resolution which surprized even myself, and I swear to perform whatever your Son has engaged for me. How generous is this, cried the old Marquis, why cannot I imitate it—— why abuse such Goodness; but Fate must be obeyed.

When he had spoke these Words, he made a Sign to *Forsan* to come near, after which this Gentleman presented me his Hand, and said, it was the Marquis's Pleasure he should have the Honour of conducting me to the Apartment allotted for me; would it were my Grave, said I to myself, yet suffer him to lead me, and kept back the Tears which were ready to burst, and give vent to the Anguish of my swollen Heart. He took the Opportunity as we were going to ask my Pardon for all his past Transgressions, and begged me to believe he would atone for them by the Fidelity and Submission of his future Conduct. To all which, I answered very coolly, and if I was capable of feeling any Relief in this dreadful Situation, it was when I was rid of him.

The Apartment in which he left me, was furnished and adorned with a Profusion of Magnificence——the Gildings, Carvings, Glasses shined on all Sides—— my Eyes were struck with the Glare, but my Heart was in such a cruel State of Dejection, that it scarce was sensible of any Thing. I throwed myself into an easy Chair, and the long restrained Tears now I was alone, burst forth, and afforded me some little Ease, else I verily

verily believe I had been suffocated——but I enjoyed this poor Relief but a short Time : The House Steward came in, and with a great deal of Respect, asked me if I would have Supper served up. I want nothing, answered I, and the greatest Pleasure you can do me, is to suffer me to retire to rest ; but he replied, that tho' his Orders were to obey me in every thing, he could not consent I should be without Refreshment, after the Fatigue of my Journey. With these Words he left me, and presently after entered two Footmen, with the Services of the Table, the Cloath was laid, and I was not a little surprized to see two Plates.

When all was spread : a number of Men in rich Liveries, brought in the Dishes, and delivered them to the Steward, who placed them on the Table, I was not accustomed to these Ceremonies, and in spite of my Melancholy they amused me.

The Moment the first Course was placed, a Valet de Chamber appeared at the Door, carrying two Flambeaux, and followed by the young Marquis, he made a low Bow to me, and after having presented his Hand, to lead me to the Table, sat down just over against me, without speaking one Word.

This Sight produced in me an odd kind of Emotion, and which I am utterly unable to describe——it could not be called Pleasure, our present Circumstances would not admit of it, nor was it truly Pain ; the Presence of a Man so much the Lord of all my Faculties could not be disgustful to me——it was therefore a Mixture of both, and created a hurry of Spirits greater than in all the various Accidents of my Life I had ever known before. The Number of Servants in waiting was such a Restraint upon me, that I scarce durst look upon him, and when I did it, was but by Stealth : He either did in reality, or I imagined it, appear under less Affliction than when I saw him first, and this gave me no small Surprise, for tho' his Grief was Death to me, yet I thought he ought not to be able to overcome it.

In this Situation of Mind, it could not be expected I should have any Appetite to eat, tho' the Marquis was
very

very diligent in carving for me, whatever he imagined might be agreeable to me——we drank to each other several Times by a Bow, but spoke not a Word, and this dumb Scene lasted all the Time we were together.

As full of Inquietude as I was, I had not power to rise from Table for a long Time, till recollecting that my Tedioufness might be taken Notice of, and the Motive of it suspected, I quitted my Chair, and the Marquis immediately took me by the Hand. The Flambeaux led the Way, and I was conducted into a Bedchamber, where I found two Women waiting on each side a rich Toylet, that very Toylet which had been presented to me, and I had left behind me in my Lodgings at *Paris* ; one of them advanced an easy Chair the Moment I came in, and then with the other attended behind it, ready to receive my Commands.

As soon as I was seated the Marquis made me a profound Reverence, and went out of the Room——as I cast my Eyes on him, that Instant I saw he was in Tears, that Sight melted down all my Resolution, and I burst into an immoderate Fit of Weeping.

On this, one of the Woman drew near, and with a great deal of Sweetness, as well as Humility, begg'd I would not afflict myself, but exert that good Sense the World allowed me to be Mistress of, in surmounting my Distresses, if it were possible I could labour under any, in the splendid Condition I now was. Alas! cried I, with a Sigh, I deserve not these Favours from Fortune——why are they not bestowed on one who would become them better ?

I then began to think of my poor Aunt, and enquired if a Woman I had brought with me, and very much loved, were removed from me ? They assured me to the contrary, and said that when the young Marquis conducted me to his Father's Apartment, the Comptroller of the House had taken her into a Room, and that she was now at Supper in the Steward's Parlour, where she was treated with all imaginable Kindness in Respect to me, and I should see her instantly.

I was highly satisfied with this Answer, and as soon as she came in, I desired to be left alone with her, which Order being obeyed, I began to question her about what she had observed in the House, and in what Manner they behaved to her. Ah! my dear Lady, replied she, with Eyes sparkling with Joy, a thousand Times better than ever I could have expected, I have supped with the young Lord's Nurse, who is extremely kind to me——all the Men, dressed as fine as Counts, waited upon me, and called me Mademoiselle at ever Word—I never was so treated in all my Life——methinks I am in Paradise——I believe indeed it's all upon your Account; but no matter for that——I take the more Pleasure in it for being obliged to you for it.

So great was her Transport, that I believe she would have talked all Night, if I had not interrupted her, by saying I thought it requisite we should both of us go to Bed after our Journey; with all my Heart, said she, for my Heart's at ease, and I am sure I shall sleep well. I then asked her, if she knew where she was to lie? Yes, indeed, said she, taking a Candle in her Hand, while you were at Supper, the Nurse shewed me all your Apartments, and the Chamber appointed for me——See there, Madam, said she, making me look into a small Room, that opened from my own; what a fine Field-Bed there is——good God! continued she, laying her Hand on the Bedding, it is almost a Sin to spoil all this——what Sheets are here, our Curates Surplice is not half so white and fine——her Exclamations would have made me laugh at any other time; but I was now incapable of being diverted with any thing, so made her put me to Bed with all the haste she could, after which she retired.

Weary as I was it was not without great Difficulty I went to Sleep, there was something so astonishing in what had happened to me that Day, that I could scarce believe but it was all a Dream: But these flattering Ideas were of no long Continuance.——Alas! cry'd I to myself, and weeping bitterly, it is but too true——I
lose

lose for ever all I love——marrying the Father, all Hopes, even the most distant ones in regard to the Son, are cut entirely off.——Great God! what have I done——in what Miseries has my Obedience to the Will of that dear Man plung'd me in——why did I consent to this shocking Sacrifice?——if it was determined I should be unhappy in being forever separated from my Lover, sure I might have allowed myself the Consolation of never being another's.——I might then have loved him, and been beloved by him without a Crime——tho' our Eyes had never met, our Hearts would have sympathized, and bore a Partnership in each others Woe, and that very Knowledge would have enabled both to support our mutual Misfortune;——but now what Relief remains——even the Privilege of complaining is denied.——O! wretched——wretched *Jeanetta*, pursued I, wringing my Hands, and yielding to the most violent Despair, till a Heaviness like that of Death came on me, and I no longer was sensible of any thing. I cannot call this Interval of Torture true Repose, because when I waked from it, I did not find myself in the least refresh'd; nevertheless it was broad Day when I opened my Eyes, and found *Barbara*, who was accustomed to rise early, at my Bedside. She enquired after my Health, and told me she fear'd I was not well, having heard me groan several Times; I told her that my Mind suffer'd more than my Body; so much the worse, cry'd she, the Body will soon feel the Effects of it, and then both will be bad. These Words were, alas! but, too prophetic, as it soon after proved.

The Moment I was up the two Woman I had dismissed the Night before, came into my Chamber and begg'd leave to dress me, in order to pass into the Apartment of my Lord Marquis, who entreated the Favour of seeing me as soon as possible.——I trembled at a Request I knew to be a Command, and sat down while they prepar'd my Hair, and adorned me a gay glittering Wretch.

As I cast my Eyes on the Pictures that hung in my Chamber, that of a very beautiful Infant, whose Features me-
thought

thought had some Resemblance with those of my dear Marquis surprized me; and immediately I ask'd for whom it was design'd? For our young Lord, replied she that was dressing me, and that next to it is his Mother's, our first Lady. How! cry'd I, has the Marquis been twice married? No, Madam, answer'd she, but we look upon you as our second Lady. I said no more——these Words, though informing me no more than what I too well knew before, were like so many Daggers to my Heart.——The Thought was dreadful, and Nature avoids as much possible every thing that shocks it.

I was scarce got ready when a Valet de Chamber from the young Marquis, came to enquire how I had pass'd the Night, and if I were disposed to go into his Father's Apartment. I answer'd, that when he pleased I would attend him, and then enquired how the sick Lord did. The Valet de Chamber replied, that he had enjoy'd a very quiet Sleep, and now spoke with more Facility than he had done, which was look'd upon as a good Sign, and gave great Hopes of his Recovery. While he was speaking, Monsieur *Forfan* enter'd, and told me they waited for me with Impatience, to hear the Contract read to me, which was just drawn up, and to have it sign'd.

The very Name of Contract threw me into a cold Sweat, and not able to conceal my Disorder, I thought, said I, they would not have perform'd that Ceremony till the Marquis was perfectly recover'd. He is eager, Madam, answer'd he, to secure his Happiness.——He has pass'd the greatest Part of the Night in giving Instructions to his Lawyer; and when you hear what he has done for you, you will judge of the true Esteem he has for you, and confess the Advantages that arise from marrying a Man advanced in Years.

I said nothing to all, but suffer'd him to lead me through the Apartments: I knew not how I got to the sick Person's Chamber: My Knees bent under me through Trouble and Weakness, and I stagger'd at every Step I took; on my Entrance I found two Strangers there, the one Writing, and the other seeming to dictate

tate to him at a Desk at the lower End of the Room, I doubted not but they were proceeding on the cruel Contract, and look'd on them, as a Wretch condemn'd does on the Executioner.

The old Marquis was sitting up in his Bed, with a rich Night Gown thrown over him, as there was more light in the Room than had been the Night before, I had a fuller View of him, and was surprized to find his Looks so little alter'd in an Illness so dangerous, as his was judg'd to be.——When I drew near, he took me by the Hand, and pressing it with more Violence than one could have imagin'd in his Condition, gave Orders to be left alone with me, which being that Instant obeyed, he spoke to me in these Terms.

My present Weakness, lovely *Jeancuta*, said he, will not permit me to speak much, therefore, expect a direct Answer to what I shall say.——This it is——the State to which you see me reduced is owing to you——if I recover it is to you I shall be indebted for my Life——my Son assures me you are ready to make me happy.——*Dubois* has inform'd me in what a heroick manner you consented to this Sacrifice:——Tell me if you repent it:——It is not yet too late——say but the Word, and I shall leave you at your Liberty, and sacrifice in my Turn the small Remnant of Life, Fate might otherwise have allotted me.

No, my Lord, answer'd I resolutely, my Word is given to your Son, and I will not recall it: Since to preserve a Father he yields up all he holds dear beside, I will convince him, that she who has been honoured with his Affection is in some Measure worthy of it, by foregoing all she had to hope in Life, in order to gratify his Wishes.

I stifled my Sighs, restrain'd my Tears, and if I could would have also disguised that deadlike Paleness, which I have since heard o're-spread my Lips and Cheeks while I was speaking these Words.——I perceived the Marquis observed my every Look; but he took no Notice of it, and when I had done: It is enough, said he, my Son shall be call'd in, and the Contract shall be read. He

He then rung a Bell which was placed at his Bed's-head, and *Forfan* entring, received his Orders, in the mean time, is not being so near me disagreeable to you *Jeanetta*? said he; but I was able to answer only with a low Bow: The young Marquis that instant came in, drest with the utmost Magnificence, all the melancholy which had clouded his dear Brows the Evening before, seemed now totally dissipated, and he appear'd like one going to a Party of Pleasure. This second Effort, cry'd his Father, giving him his Hand, moves me as much as the first: The Contentment I see in your Countenance assures me, I am truly dear you; and that strong as Inclination was, paternal Affection, for I put Duty out of the Question, gets the better.——I wish to God, continued he, turning to me, you could in this too imitate his Example. I bowed again but could not speak.——Alas! what Answer had I to make, my Looks would have then given the lye to whatever I had said.

How weak and unstable is a Mind in Love: I wish'd in reality nothing more than the young Marquis's Contentment, yet when he seemed to be posselt of it I was disquieted, and reproach'd his Want of Love. I now looked earnestly upon him, having an Opportunity as he was talking with his Father, and observed somewhat in him, which shew'd me that his Air of Satisfaction was but borrowed, and that he suffer'd inwardly, perhaps, equal with myself——this gave me some little Ease.

——He loves me still, thought I, with the same Passion as ever, and like a Victim is adorn'd with Chaplets only to render the Sacrifice more magnificent. I should here have enter'd into a Train of Reflections; but the Lawyer came in with the Contract, and beginning to read, it put a Stop to them.

The Names and Titles of the Parties were pass'd over, and he came immediately to the Articles which regarded me.——I had a Jointure of seven Thousand Livres:——Jewels to the amount of an hundred Thousand Livres.——A Coach, and Chariot with six Horses each, and four for my Retinue——the Palace,

lace, my intended Husband lived in, with all the Plate and Furniture, in Case he died without Issue ; and if I had any Children by him, to enjoy the whole Estate till they should come of Age ; and then be accountable to them for the Profits of it.

Though I understood little of Business, and less of Law, I was very much surprized to hear no mention made of his Son : I thought he ought to have been the principal Party in this authentick Instrument, and that he had behaved himself too well in this Affair not to deserve to be consider'd.——This Idea struck me so strongly that I could not help speaking of it ; which as soon as I had, what an adorable Creature are you, *Jeanetta*, cry'd the Marquis, how just !——how delicate your Sentiments ! but be easy, my Charmer, I have not forgot so valuable a Son——he will be satisfied when he knows what I have done for him, and so will you.

I said no more, but could not conceive what he could have done for him equivalent to the Loss of a great Estate, all settled on me and my Heirs.——Sometimes I imagin'd he had obtain'd an additional Title for him of the King, or some Office at Court, yet neither of these seem'd in my Judgment a sufficient Compensation for his right of Inheritance.

After the Contract was read over they brought it to the old Marquis to sign, it was then presented to his Son who did the same ; but was not able to constrain himself so far, as not to tremble while he wrote his Name, and let fall some Tears, which in spite of him forced their Passage through his Eyes. This Sight moved me to that Degree, that I let the Pen fall from my Fingers two or three Times before I was able to set my Name. — The old Marquis, sick as he was, observed it, and cryed out ; ah, do not force her to it——then turned himself on the other side.

The young Marquis took this Opportunity to throw himself at my Feet,——Ah ! *Jeanetta* ! said he, what are you doing ?——Would you wish me to lose the best of Fathers ?——the Vehemence with which he pronounced these Words, and the Action that accompa-

nied them pierced me to the Soul, and calling to my Aid all the little Stock of Spirit I had left, they enabled me to sign my Name.

The young Marquis then acquainted his Father with what I had done, on which he turn'd himself and gave me his Hand: It is enough, lovely *Jeanetta*, said he, I know your Sincerity, and am assured you will never hate the Man, whom you have set your Hand to love. —The more Difficulty you had in bringing yourself to it, the more you will remember the Obligation. After this he seem'd disposed to sleep, and order'd *Forsan* to conduct me back to my Apartment, and endeavour to amuse me.

We all went out of the Chamber except the young Marquis, who remained with his Father: He waited on me to the Door, and made me Signs of applauding my Behaviour, which gave me a kind of melancholy Satisfaction; how wretched was my Condition any one may judge, when the only Man I ever did or could love, approved of my giving myself forever from him, and the only Comfort I had felt was that he did so.

I was no sooner got into my Apartment, than I found myself extremely indisposed: It cannot, indeed, be thought strange I was so, 'tis rather to be wondered at that the Horrors I endured, had not a greater Effect on me, and that I survived even the first Knowledge of what they expected from me: I resisted as long as I could, several alternate Fits of Heat and Cold; but at length grew so excessive ill, that they were oblig'd to put me to Bed, where after I had lain a Minute, I seem'd more compos'd, and the Women about me flatter'd themselves I was better.

Neither the old Marquis nor his Son were made acquainted with what had befallen me, the whole Family knew how dear I was to both, and the Violence the one did himself in resigning me to the other; so with Reason apprehended that neither of them would be able to sustain the Knowledge of what I suffer'd.

It was not, however, possible to keep it long a Secret—it seem'd as if what I had done work'd a Miracle

racle in Favour of the old Marquis, he was visibly recovered, and every Body pronounced him entirely cut of Danger: Which he no sooner heard than he declared his Intentions of concluding the Marriage, to the Amazement of the whole Family, to whom it appear'd strange, as well, indeed, it might; that a Man who was thought one Day to be on the Brink of Eternity, should on the very next resolve to become a Bridegroom, and celebrate his Nuptials on the same Day the Contract had been sign'd, yet such were his Orders, and who durst offer any thing in Opposition! The Priest was sent for into his Chamber, and having made the young Marquis be call'd, my dear Son, said he, the Proofs you have given me of your Love and Duty, are, perhaps, greater than a Father could expect——yet have I one more to ask, and then all will be fulfill'd;—it is, continued he, that you will take upon you the Office of conducting *Jeanetta* hither, that I may receive her from your Hand——though they tell me I am better, I am not certain I may live to another Day, and could not die in Peace, without the Consolation of leaving her the Title of Marchioness *De L—V—*. The young Marquis made no other Answer than a low Bow in token of Obedience, nor, indeed, as he has since told me, was it in his power to have uttered one Word——To conceal his Confusion therefore, as well as to seem ready to do what he knew there was no avoiding, he left the Room precipitately in Order to fetch me; but how great was his Surprise, when entring my Chamber, my Women desired he would tread softly——what's the Matter, cried he, impatiently; my Lady is gone to Bed, answered one of them, and is, we believe a Sleep——he express'd some Surprise, that I should go to Bed at so early an Hour, and presently suspecting the Truth, would be informed of the Occasion, on which they were obliged to tell him the Condition I had been in——Alas! cried he, in a pretty loud Voice, this is what I always feared.

I was not asleep, and these Words made me open my Eyes, and put my Head out between the Curtains;

I saw who it was, and reaching my Hand, approach, my Lord, said I, you seem under some Concern, what is it you require further from me? Dreading to renew my Disorders, he would not relate the Nature of his Message, till he had asked me several Questions concerning my Health, and I, cautious of giving him Disquiet, told him I felt no Pain, and was much better; on which he took Courage to inform me on what Business he came, and entreated me in the most moving Terms to finish what I had so well begun—my Love and Submission to his Will, made me resolve to do every Thing he required, tho' at the expence of my Life, and I answered him with a greater Calmness than I believe he expected, that he should have Reason to be content, and he then went into another Room, while they dressed me: and as soon as I was ready, tho' I had a Mist before my Eyes, a Death-like Dew upon my Face, Trembling in every Limb, and all the Symptoms of Dissolution on me, I followed him without Murmuring at my Fate, and determined, if Life would last so long, to force myself to compleat the Sacrifice.

Every thing was ready for the fatal Ceremony; on entering the Chamber I was conducted to the Bedside, the Priest advanced, the young Marquis let go my Hand, and retired to a more distant Part of the Room, I gave up myself and him for lost—all the Courage I had assumed forsook me—Resolution yielded to Nature, and after giving a great Shriek, I fell motionless to the Ground.

What then was done about me, I was wholly ignorant of, but when I recovered I found myself in Bed; and soon after felt I had a Fever—the Distemper was violent, and brought me to the last Extremity—my Life for two Days was despaired of, but on the third was judged somewhat better. But how was I surprized, when waking out of my Sleep, and offering to put my Hand out of Bed I found my Arms tied down,—I called out to know who had done this, and struggled to get free, but the Woman who attended me held the Bedcloaths close to me, and begged me with Tears in

their Eyes to lie still, telling me my Life depended on my being kept warm, and free from the least Breath of Air : I then desired to know why my Arms were bound, to which they making only evasive Answers I grew impatient, and would needs be informed of the Nature of my Disease——at last they told me it was the Small-Pox——the Small-Pox ! cried I, oh ! then I am dead. No, Madam, replied a Priest, who had been called in, if this favourable Turn continues, your Physicians say, you will be entirely out of Danger——put therefore your Confidence in God, and resign yourself to his Disposal both here and hereafter. Ah ! do not flatter me, dear Father, cried I, let me know the real Truth, that I may do what is necessary for the welfare of my poor Soul.

The good Ecclesiastic commended my Piety, and tho' he again assured me, that it was the Opinion of the Doctors that I should recover, yet he said I ought not to neglect making the same Preparations, as tho' I were certain I must that Instant be called to appear before the dread Tribunal, whence there is no Appeal. This Reflection indeed terrified me so much, that I confess myself with great Devotion, and must avow, tho' some will call it Superstition, that from the Moment I had done so, I visibly mended.

My first Thoughts as I grew better were, whether the young Marquis were acquainted with the Nature of my Distemper or not ; I thought it would not be proper to ask that Question of those who attended me, and *Barbara* I had not seen since I was taken ill, which I very much wondered at——I enquired for her, but they said, that finding she could do me no Service in my present Condition, she was gone into the Country on some Business she had there ; but would soon return ; this seemed odd to me, but as it was not in my Power to come at the Knowledge of any thing but as they pleased to tell me, I was obliged to rest myself contented.

At last, however, I bethought myself of an Expedient : I enquired concerning the old Marquis's Health, on which they answered, that the Accident that had hap-
pened

pened to me in his Presence, had like to have cost him his Life; but that now he had been two Days out of Danger. And how then, cried I, does his Son support the Relapse of a Father so dear to him? He is pretty well, said one of my Attendants——I was a little startled at the Word *pretty well*; does he know the Condition I am in, said I? No, Heaven forbid he should, replied she, no body dare inform him of it, lest the Consequences should be fatal.

This unwary Answer, which she that gave as well as the other that stood by, endeavoured afterwards to give a different turn to, convinced me, that my beloved Admirer was sick; however, as I thought the best way to come at the Truth, was to take no Notice I suspected it, I forbore making any further mention of the young Marquis; but expressed the utmost Impatience for the Sight of *Barbara*, hoping, that to humour me, they would suffer her to come, for I could not be brought to believe she had quitted the House, and left me in the Danger I was apprehended to be.

So much Disquiet of Mind, or the Course of the Distemper, I know not which, brought the Fever again upon me, which my good Aunt hearing, would no longer be kept from coming into my Room; as I was now given over by the Physicians, they did not oppose her, and she was at last admitted: She had no sooner looked upon me, than she cried out, that as she was my Servant, she would have the Management of me, or she would tell every Body that they kept her away, only because they had a mind to kill me——this Passion, and the Belief that whatever was done to me, could now neither make me better or worse, prevailed on them, to let her do as she would, which indeed saved my Life. Indeed the over care which in great Towns is taken of sick People, especially of those in the Distemper I was in, I am convinced is very often fatal to them; my Aunt proceeded with me, in a quite contrary manner than they had done; she took off by degrees some of the Clothes, with which they had loaded my Bed to keep me in a continual and indeed immoderate

Heat——she suffered me to drink a little Wine, and to breathe more Air, which it is certain I stood in need of; and in fine, ordered me so well, that in three Days the Fever quite left me——every Body wondered at the Change, and my new Nurse gained great Reputation by it——as contrary as she had acted to the Rules prescribed by the Physicians, they could not but allow she had been miraculously successful, and agreed that I was now entirely out of Danger.

This News being reported to the old Marquis, who had been anxious beyond Expression on my Account, and had sent continually to enquire after my Health, was transported to be told I was likely to recover——then, said he, I am happy, and immediately dispatched *Dubois* to my Chamber, with this important Message.

I come, Madam, said he, from my Lord Marquis to congratulate the Amendment he hears there is in you, and to assure you from him, that no future Disquiet shall ever arise to you on his score——he begs you therefore for the sake of all you hold dear in the World, to contribute all you can to your speedy Recovery, by a perfect Ease of Mind——he bid me also add, continued he, that the Time is now at Hand, in which all the Troubles you have undergone shall be fully recompensed.

How! in what manner, cried I, impatiently? that is not for me to resolve, answered *Dubois*; but if you will take my Opinion, it is in such a way as you will have nothing left to wish.

But the young Marquis, said I, is he well? not perfectly, Madam, replied *Dubois*; but I believe will soon be in a Condition to wait upon you. I durst say no more, my Women were in the Room, nor durst I dismiss them, in order to have any farther Discourse with him, for fear of giving any Cause of Offence, where it so much behoved me to keep well——I said no more therefore than to give my Duty to the Marquis, and entreat *Dubois* to make my acknowledgments for all his Favours in the best manner he could.

Barbara

Barbara, after the Success of her Endeavours took so much upon her in my Apartment, and on the old Marquis's being acquainted with the care she had of me, the whole Family had such strict Orders to obey her in every thing, that no body durst approach me without asking her leave, so that now we were very often alone together—I had two great Requests to make her, but was sometime before I could bring them out; for I no sooner began to open my Lips to ask her any Questions, than she enjoyed me Silence, and told me very peremptorily that I must either be ruled or buried—the Thoughts of Dying terrified me so much that I was glad to hold my Tongue——so excellent a Means is Fear to render one obedient.

I had now been ill thirteen Days, and still I was not suffered to talk; but at the end of that Time a little Liberty of Speech was allowed me——ah, my dear *Barbara*, said I, taking her round the Neck, and kissing her, I owe my Life to you——and I will never forget your Goodness——I have done but my Duty, answered she, so deserve no Praise on that Score——you having nothing to do, but to get well, and then they say you will be as happy as a Queen.——Well, but my good Friend, resumed I, you must grant me one Thing, and that will compleat my Cure. I wish it does not hinder it, cried she, for I'll lay my Life it is somewhat about the Marquis, the young one I mean, for as to the old one, I do not suppose you are under any Concern about him.——You are much in the right indeed, said I, tell me then, how he is, and what he says to my Illness. You must know then, said she, looking down on her Fingers, as was always her way, when she told an Untruth; he is gone a Journey into the Country, but he will come back soon I hear. Ah! *Barbara*, resumed I, how have I deserved that you should impose upon me——I see now you don't love me. When I had spoke this, I turned to the other side of the Bed, and pretended to be very angry——How strange this is, now, said she, if one does not tell you Things you are vexed, and if one

did, it may be that you would vex more—there's no humouring People that have such Fancies in their Heads as you have.

There are many People, who by not telling a Thing directly, make it appear rather worse than it is——my poor Aunt was of this Number, she would not give any Answer to my Question for fear of giving me Pain, yet by attempting to conceal what I desired to know, made me imagine all that Terror could suggest. I thought no less, than that my Lover was dead, or in such a Condition that his Life was despaired of ; but resolving to continue no longer in suspense, well then, said I, since you will not satisfy me, I'll rise this Instant and go and convince myself——Oh, Heaven forbid, cried *Barbara*, frightened at my Words and the Motion I made, as if determined to do as I had said, lie still, and compose yourself, my dear Lady, and if you'll promise me to put your trust in God, and not torment yourself, I will tell you the whole Truth. I was too impatient not to promise every Thing she desired on that Condition, but how little was I able to fulfil it when she acquainted me with what had happened.

That dear, that amiable Man, she told me, was taken ill the Moment I fainted away ; the Constraint he had put upon himself, in giving his Father Proofs of a more than filial Affection, joined to the Grief in which he saw he had involved me, turned all his Blood, and threw him into a burning Fever——in his Ravings, my Name was continually in his Mouth, and he became at length so wild, that for the safety of his Life, they were obliged to bind him ; he having in one of his Fits broke from those that attended him and run to my Apartment, crying out he would see me and die.——This it seems happen'd when my Distemper was at the height, and as he had never had the Small-Pox, the Infection seized him, and for eight Days there was little hopes of his Life.

I was obliged to keep my Sighs and Tears during this melancholly Account, restrained for fear of not hearing what succeeded so sad a beginning ; but, thank Heaven,

Heaven, the worst was past, my Aunt assured me that his Father had sent him a Message, but what it was she could not learn, that had given a turn to his Distemper, and he was now in a fair way of Recovery, tho' every one said he would be very much marked, and not half so handsome as he was.

Alas! said I, of what Importance is that, provided his dear Life be safe——How unfortunate am I not to be in a Condition to attend him——never would I quit his Chamber——never close my Eyes, till assured I should behold him living when I waked. I was running on in this manner, but *Barbara* interrupted me, and charged me to compose myself. I was for making some reply, but she told me if I spoke a Word more, I must not expect she would ever give me any farther Account of the Marquis; this Menace prevailed upon me, and my Tongue was hushed, but my Thoughts continued as anxious and as active as ever.

After having revolved a thousand Things in my Mind, I began to remember the other Request I had to make, which was to consult my Looking-Glass, that I might judge how far that fatal Enemy to Beauty the Small-Pox had spared me——I had often been uneasy when I reflected that it was possible all the little Charms I had been Mistress of would vanish, and I might become disagreeable, nay even ugly, by the cruel Marks it might leave behind——tho' I had never dared to flatter myself that the old Marquis's Message, in which he promised to make me Recompenſe for the Troubles I had sustained, would extend so far as to consent to my Union with his Son, yet it shocked me to think that the Man who once adored me, should hereafter look on me with Loathing, so that tho' I had Vanity enough——Heaven knows too much, yet at this Time I may safely say my Love, and Desire of being always loved by the Marquis, was the sole Cause of my Anxiety on the Score of my Face.——Heavens! cried I to myself, how unhappy shall I be, if I become deformed——was it not my Beauty that first inspired the Marquis with so violent a Passion for me, and will not my loss of that Beauty, extinguish likewise all the Desires it

excited?——it was in vain that I reflected on his Generosity, the Vows he had made of everlasting Constancy, when once the Cause ceased, I was assured the Effects would do so too.

I heard, however, the next Day a piece of News which was very agreeable to me——it was of the Count *De Saint Fal's* Arrival; I was told also that he was greatly moved at the Recital of what I had gone through, and that he sent his Compliments with an Assurance of waiting on me, as soon as I allowed any one the Liberty of seeing me. Nor was this a meer Piece of Form, he came ten Times in a Day to my Chamber-Door, and then past to his Cousin's, divided as it were between us——sure never was so disinterested a Friend, nor so generous a Rival.

I promised myself a great deal of Satisfaction in seeing this amiable Friend, I could depend on his Probity in informing me of all I desired to know; but as the Curiosity of discovering what Effect the Small-Pox had on me, still remained, I took Courage to beg my Aunt to let me have a Looking-Glass; with a good deal of Difficulty she complied, but soon repented it, for I was so much surprized at the hideous Roughness of my Skin, which before had been so delicately smooth, that I screamed out, and let fall the Glass.——I thought what would come on't, said *Barbara*, picking up the Pieces——you are much better for your Curiosity——I warrant now you think your pretty Face is quite spoil'd? but I know that you'll be as handsome as ever——thanks to my care——I was so persuaded she deceived me in this Particular, that I fell into Tears, which made her Murmur at me grievously: in order to make my Peace with her, I promised to be very patient for the future on condition she would let me see myself again——and she brought me another Glass, whether what she said had prejudic'd me, or that I really did not appear so frightful, as I since have seen some do, I know not, but I was much better contented than I had been—I found my Features were not swell'd——that my Eyes retained all their former

former Fire and Sweetness, and lifting up one of the dried Pocks, found my Skin was smooth underneath——this gave me a new Life as it were——all my Disquiet vanished ; but it furnished me afterward with matter of Reflection on the Weakness of Humanity, which suffers itself to be elated or depressed by the meekest Trifles—in fine, we are but Children at all Ages——Toys are still our Pursuit, and however they differ in their Form, and Name, their essential Worth is much the same.

The next Day I was agreeably surprized with a Billet wrote by the young Marquis's own Hand, which contributed more to my Re-Establishment than all the Doctors in the World could have done. The Lines it contained were these :

To the adorable *Jeanetta*.

THE News that you were upon Recovery, has worked a perfect Cure on me ; if your Affection is equal to mine, what I now send will have the same happy Effect on you——were I not bound to Secrecy, I could add somewhat I flatter myself would hasten it——but that is a Pleasure my Father has reserved to himself, and I must leave you to guess at it——adieu, my Charmer——make me easy by knowing you are so.

Yours

L—V—.

What had I not to hope from this Letter——did it not seem to tally with the Message sent to me by the old Marquis!——could I have been blamed if I had indulged the most flattering Ideas!——my Lover bids me guess, cried I to myself——what can I guess so fortunate for both, as that his Father, touched with his Piety, will no longer be an Obstacle to our mutual Wishes!——but then the fatal Passion he is possess of for me,——has it not already brought him to the Brink of the Grave——will he in order to resign me, resign himself to Death?——or will that dutiful——that tender Son consent he should do so?——the more I thought,

thought, the more I was confounded—it was an Enigma past my Power to explain, and I at last, tho' with much Difficulty, resolved to wait with Patience till Time should produce the Event.

Saint Fal was now permitted to come into my Chamber, and I hoped to learn from him the Truth of what I was so nearly concerned in ; and all he could inform me was, that the most pleasing Serenity sat on the Countenances of both the old, and young Marquis ; that the former had told him, he had never known so perfect a Satisfaction as he now enjoyed, and the latter entertained him with nothing but Discourses on me, yet such as were far from seeming the Dictates of a disappointed Love——this still added to my Hopes, yet dared I not too far give way to them : ——I thought proper to answer the Marquis's Letter, but was at a loss for terms to express myself in my present Situation, ——to write to him as a Lover, would ill become a Woman, who was contracted to his Father, and I had been so accustomed to treat him as such, that it seemed awkward to depart from it. I studied a Medium, however, as much as possible, and expressed myself in this Manner.

To the Marquis *De L——V——*.

IF the Desire of obeying your Commands could restore my Health, I should be able this Moment to tell you in Person how much I rejoice in the Recovery of Yours ; but we must both attend on Time for that, as well as an Explanation of those pleasing, and at once ambiguous Hopes your Letter contains——Be assured of this, however, that all my Wishes are centered in your Happiness, and whatever contributes to that darling Point, will be ever grateful to

Yours

Jeanetta De B——.

P. S.

P. S. *As greatly as I wish to see you, I am certain I shall have sufficient Reasons for Mortification, when I do——the few Charms I was once Mistress of, are now no more; but as I valued them only as they secured the Affection of one Person, if by other Motives deprived of him, I shall little regard the loss of Beauty.*

I entreated Monsieur *De Saint Fal*, to be the Bearer of this Billet, and to let me know what his Cousin said concerning it: He promised to give me an exact Account, and I knew him too well not to depend entirely on him.

He stayed some time before he returned, and never did any Moments seem more tedious——Alas! cried I to myself, the very Idea of my being less handsome has perhaps done more than all the Obstacles our Love has met with has had power to do——what now avails it, tho' the old Marquis, in consideration of the Sorrows he has occasioned me, should consent to our Marriage, if he himself should grow averse to it——Yes, I am lost, if Beauty was the sole Attraction——Men, especially of his Age, are guided by meer Outside——where the Eye is not pleased they give themselves not the trouble of examining whether the Deficiencies of the Form are not atoned for by the Riches of the Mind——yet, continued I, my dear Marquis, seems to have more elevated Ideas——he has a thousand Times sworn, that it was my Soul he loved, and that remains the same, tho' it may cease to shine with so much Energy through my Features, as before this cruel Distemper seized me.

In these Meditations, the Count found me, and brought an Answer with him which quieted all my Doubts. These were the Words:

To the ever charming *Jeanetta*.

WHILE I cannot see yourself, to see any Thing from you is the first of my Wishes, and of my Happiness——not a Syllable wrote by that dear Hand, and dictated by that dear Heart; but is a Cordial beyond all can be administered——my Strength and Spirits are encreased to a double Propotion of what they were two Hours ago, and as I design to make your Letter the Entertainment of the whole Night, I doubt not if by Tomorrow I should be able to walk as far as your Chamber; if the abominable roughness of my Face did not make me fearful of frightening you, instead of affording that Satisfaction which it's my sole Ambition always to give, to the lovely *Jeanetta's*

Most truly devoted,

L——V——.

P. S. I ought to chide you for your cruel Postscript——do you know me so little as to imagine any Alteration in your Person, can abate a Passion, which has Virtue, and the highest Reason for its Foundation?—No, *Jeanetta*, your Soul will be forever lovely, and requires not the Assistance of any exterior Charms to shew itself to a Heart like mine——I hope you are of the same way of Thinking on my Score——else how shall I appear before you, thus changed, thus deformed as I am in every thing, in which the Eye is concerned.

When I had finished reading this agreeable Billet, the Count *De Saint Fal* fell a laughing very heartily——your Letter to my Cousin, said he, occasioned a diverting Scene, it seems you discovered in it some Apprehensions of being less beautiful than you were, on which he immediately called for a Looking-Glass, and having examined himself, cried out, O, how will the charming *Jeanetta*, be ever able to look upon me again——

it is impossible she can know me——he run on for half an Hour together I believe in these kind of Exclamations, then sat down to write, and I dare answer, that if you confess the Truth he has attacked you with your own Weapons.

I laughed at what Monsieur *De Saint Fal* said, and after a little Raillery on the Subject of Beauty, we both concluded that where Love was perfect and sincere, no alteration of Person either by Time, Sicknefs, or any other Accident, could in the least abate the Purity of it, much less render disagreeable what was once the contrary.

After this I past my Time with as much Tranquillity as could be expected from my Situation; the good-natured *Saint Fal* brought me the News of the Marquis three Times a Day, and as often reported what Messages I chose to have delivered to him; and it is certain this tender Intercourse greatly contributed to both our Recoveries.

The old Marquis sent his Valet de Chamber every Day to enquire after my Health, and bid him desire me from him to contribute all in my own Power to get well again, for he has a Present to make me, which he was impatient till I was in possession of——these Messages were still more and more flattering to my Hopes, yet durst not I build too much upon them for fear of a Disappointment.

The first Day I sat up, *Dubois* came from the young Marquis to let me know he had received a Visit from his Father, who was perfectly recovered: He confessed that this Sight had given him a double Pleasure, as he considered he owed the Obligation to me, who under Heaven had restored him to this new Life, having little appearance of it till I came. He added, that tho' he was forbid seeing me till further Orders he was not troubled at it, nor would have me be so, for there were Reasons for that Command which would not be displeasing to me in the end. The old Marquis, said *Dubois*, is positive in whatever he has a Mind to do, and will be obeyed,

obeyed, but then he is always just——He goes this Afternoon into the COUNTRY, and tho' I cannot say I am acquainted with the Motives of his going, yet I have some sort of a Guess at them, and if I am right, we shall hear from him again in less than eight and forty Hours——He is a Man who affects to be mysterious to the last Moment, but it would be to injure him to say he is ever obstinately in the wrong, or ever to be dissuaded from what is right.

I then asked *Dubois* if he thought I should see the old Marquis before his Departure——No, answered he, it is not to be expected, for he dreads a sick Person like Death itself——never did he give so great a Proof of his Tenderness for my Lord, as in the Visit he made him this Morning; but if you had seen the Precautions he took before he would venture into the Chamber, you would not have been able to refrain from Laughing.

This faithful Servant also acquainted me, that the Count *De Saint Fal* accompanied him out of Town, tho', said he, I believe the young Lord is little satisfied with the Journey, tho' his Duty and Complaisance to his Uncle have made him comply with it.

We were discoursing in this Manner, when somebody knocked at my Chamber, and my Aunt going to see who was there, it was immediately thrown wide open, by one of the old Marquis's Valet de Chambers. Ah! cried *Dubois*, it is my old Lord himself, come to bid you adieu, his Affection must indeed be great to surmount his Apprehensions.

It was indeed the Marquis, who stopping about five or six Paces from the Door, called out, I am come to know how you do, charming *Jeanetta*, and to take my leave. I then turned to him, and congratulated him on his Recovery. I have much to say to you on that Head, replied he, and many others at our next Meeting——I am now going into the Country, but we shall soon see each other again——in the mean Time I will send a Lady to keep you Company——one who is a dear Friend of yours, and whom you little expect——Farewel, lovely *Jeanetta*, take care of yourself, and remember

remember he desires it of you, who has it in his Power to recompense any compliance you make——our Separation will be but short. In speaking these last Words he made a low Bow and retired.

Saint Fal came the Moment after to bid me adieu——in entring, so beautiful *Jeanetta*, said he, my Uncle has been to visit you?——I was amazed to find he could so far overcome his Fears. It is a very great Obligation he lays me under, answered I, but can't you inform me, who this Friend is, that he has promised to send. No, resumed the Count, he has not let me into the Secret, but I wonder not at it, he loves to surprize every body. It must certainly be *Saint Agnes*, cried I, that he means. That is impossible, replied he, for she is gone out of Town with her Husband——I saw them both since my return : and they desired I would make you in their Names, assurances of an everlasting Friendship.

As it was impossible for me, to comprehend who the Marquis meant, I resolved to think as little as I could of it, and indeed the manner of *Saint Fal's* taking his leave, and his generous Resolution to make Love recede to Friendship was so moving, that it for a Time banished every thing else from my Mind.

I had but just dined when my Aunt acquainted me a Lady enquired, whether she could see me without giving me any uneasiness. As I did not doubt, but it was the same the Marquis had mentioned, my answer was that I was impatient for her Company. I was so indeed out of Curiosity, but had I been able to guess who she was I should have looked on every Minute as an Age, till I had her with me. It is wholly impossible to express my Transports when she appeared, and I found it was my dear Patroness and Friend, the excellent Madam *De G*——I screamed out for Joy, and run upon her with open Arms——we held each other for some Moments in the most strict Embrace, without either of us being able to speak. The Pleasure of meeting after so long an Absence was too great for Words——at last I broke out——Is it you, Madam?

Nay,

Nay then I shall begin to think Fortune is grown weary of persecuting me, since I have found you again——in all the dreadful Tryals I have undergone since I was torn from you, my Mind has ever preserved your dear Idea——Your precious Picture, the Pledge of your Friendship to me, I have kiss'd a thousand Times, and said as many Prayers for its Original. Poor Thing, cried Madam *De G*——, thou art still the same grateful, kind Creature, nor have I less remembered thee——tho' till this Day despairing of the Happiness I now enjoy.

Near an Hour was past in mutual Endearments, but as desirous as I was of being informed, how I came to be obliged to the old Marquis, for the Pleasure of seeing her, good Manners rendered it necessary I should, first, enquire after her Daughter, and Monsieur *De G*—; they are both well, answered she, and impatiently expect your Company at our Country-Seat. How! said I, shall I be so happy to be again under your Protection? Yes, my dear *Jeanetta*, replied she, 'tis on that Account I am come, but I shall not enjoy you long——You seem surprized, continued she, but ask no Questions——I have promised Secrecy, and you know I never break my Word.

So many Precautions taken to keep me from the knowledge of what was decreed for me, gave me some little Uneasiness; I confest it to my dear Friend, but she re-assured me by these Words; you have no Reason to be alarmed, said she, you may be certain I should never have been chose for an Instrument in any thing to your disadvantage. But, Madam, answered I, you know not perhaps that the Situation you find me in is owing to what I have undergone from both the old and young Marquis. Yes, said that worthy Lady, I am acquainted with the minutest Circumstances of every thing——but it was your own Fault——Your Apprehensions were too precipitate, and threw you into a real ill, instead of an imaginary one.—But I have said too much, continued she, if you have any Esteem for me ask me no farther Questions——

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my Love for you makes me diffident of myself, and I will never forgive you, if you take any Advantage of it to the prejudice of my Honour, which I once more repeat is given to preserve an inviolable Secrecy in this Affair.

I too well knew her to persevere in my Enquiries, and notwithstanding a Curiosity which might be allow'd me, in a Matter of such Moment, I never spoke one Syllable more, which should make her think I should be glad if she would break through her Engagement. I asked a thousand Pardons for my Imprudence, and protested she should have no future Reason to complain of me——She took me in her Arms, and express'd the utmost Concern, for being obliged to be so much on the reserve with me, declaring she had an entire Confidence in me, of which she would soon give me convincing Proofs, and that nothing but rendering herself unworthy of my Friendship, by forfeiting her Honour, could make her conceal any thing from me.

This dear Friend never quitted my Chamber all the time I was obliged to continue in it——At length the Strength of my Constitution, the sweet Society of so amiable a Companion, and the Messages I every Day received from my dear Marquis, fully re-established me——My very Looks were so much the same, that except a little Redness, it was scarce discernable I had ever had the Small-pox: And I diverted myself very much, in reflecting how much I should surprize my Lover, when he should see how favourably I had been treated by that terrible Distemper. I knew very well it was my Mind he most esteemed, but I also knew, that a fine Jewel well-set is much more to be prized, than when obscured by the bungling Workmanship about it.

Madam *De G*—— now finding me fit to go abroad, ask'd me if I was willing to accompany her to her Castle, where we were so much desired: I told her that nothing could be more pleasing to me; and 'tis not to be doubted but I spoke the Truth, since it was there I was made to hope the Mystery of my Fate would be unravelled.

The

The Day before we were to set out, I begged she would permit me to go to Church, and render Heaven those Thanks, I ought to do, and give the Charities which my Recovery demanded—it was my Opinion, that when one receives a great Benefit, one ought to confer such Benefits on others, as are in our Power, and I could never dispense with this Duty——Madam *De G*——applauded my pious Resolution, and told me she would accompany me in the Performance, and add to the Alms I intended to give; for, said she, I look on your Recovery as a Blessing to myself, and therefore ought to give Thanks for it, and also make the poor in some Measure partakers of it——Persevere in your Piety, my dear *Jeanetta*, said she, it is that which gives you a title to the protection of all disposing Providence——it is that which has preserved you amidst so many Dangers, and it is to that you will undoubtedly owe the happy End of all your Troubles.

Alas, I little thought my truly sincere Design of passing this Day in a kind of holy Repose, would have met with any Interruption, and that of such a Nature, as threatned me with ending it in a Prison.

After having received the Eucharist, I tarried a little to meditate on the sacred Ceremony, when all on a sudden I found myself pull'd by the Sleeve, I was somewhat surprized at the Liberty taken with me, and turning my Head saw a Woman, to whose Face I was utterly a Stranger.

Very well, Madam, said she, I am glad we have met at last, now it will be proved who is the true Countess *De Roches*——my Reader will easily judge without my making any Description the Fright I was in——I could not speak one Word, but rose and push'd from her with all my Strength, till I got to Madam *De G*——who was at some Distance from me——she saw me pale and trembling, and as I had related to her, what happened to me before on Account of that unlucky Name, I only said the Countess *De Roches*,——and she understood the Cause of this Change in my Countenance. She bid me not be alarmed, and we both made
what

what haste we could out of the Church. The Person that had given me this Confusion, did not follow me ; but as I afterwards found kept her Eye constantly upon me, and when we were pressing through the Croud to reach Madam *De G*——'s Coach, which waited for us, we heard a Voice cry, stop——stop the fictitious Countess *De Roches*: She had told her Story to the People about the Door, and all Eyes were turned upon me ; but the Equipage of Madam *De G*—— kept us from receiving any Insult, but from one Man who cried, I ought to be detain'd till a Commissary should be brought: How ridiculous a thing would that be, cried my dear Friend ! The Woman who makes this Clamour may, perhaps, be deceived by some Resemblance between this Lady and the Person she mentions ; but I will answer, that it would be highly dangerous for any who shall dare to affront us. These Words spoke with a resolute and determin'd Air, joined with the Figure Madam *De G*——and her Attendants made, silenced the Fellow, but not the Countess, whose Cries pursued us, after we got into the Coach.—— We drove, however, at too great a Rate for any one to overtake us ; though one of the Footmen told us, that two Serjeants, who were accidentally passing by, and heard the Complaint, followed us a considerable way. We arrived safe at the Marquis's, but I could not presently get rid of my Fright, and, indeed, the Affair might have been of very ill Consequence ; so dangerous as well as silly a thing it is to assume another Person's Name, though done with no Design of prejudicing any one.

The next Day we set out, and as soon as we were out of *Paris*, Madam *De G*——said the Tedioufness of the Journey would require something to amuse me : Hitherto, said she, I have had no Opportunity to entertain you with any thing concerning myself, and it is but just I should put the same Confidence in you, that you have always done in me : I will, therefore, continued this amiable Lady embracing me, give you a little Detail of what I have gone through since we saw each other.

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other. I made her those Acknowledgements her Goodness demanded from me, and told her that any thing relating to her, would be in an inexpressible manner interesting to me ; on which she began the little Narrative she had promised, in these Terms.



The History of Monsieur De G——.

YOU are no Stranger, said she, to the Disposition of Monsieur *De G——*, nor to his amorous Inclinations, so will easily imagine I am going to entertain you with his Gallantries : Heaven only knows how greatly I have suffer'd by them ; for you are the first to whom I ever divulged this Error in his Nature ; and contented myself with secretly bewailing my Misfortune, and beseeching Heaven to put an end to it.——I must, indeed, do him the Justice to say, he behaved to me with the greatest Respect, and that in part compensated for the want of that Tenderness, which I was sensible he bestowed elsewhere ; but at last even that was withdrawn, I observed a visible Change in his Looks, and manner of speaking to me ; he now was not only cold, but also rugged and churlish, whenever I came into his Presence, nothing that I could say, or do was pleasing to him ; and I began to tremble, lest I should lose all his Friendship as well as Love. I thought he must now have an Amour with some Woman, who had either Merit, or Artifice enough to engage his serious Affection, and that I ought to search into it, and try all my Efforts to win him from so formidable a Rival.

But, alas ! how difficult a Task this was, I need not tell you, who knew so well his Secrecy in Matters of this kind ; I was, therefore, very much at a Loss how to proceed,

proceed, that I might come at the Certainty of what I was so deeply concern'd in. That he was passionately in Love all his Actions denoted——he was hardly ever at Home, and when he was so, sullen, peevish, and sometimes extremely melancholly.——I had no room to doubt of my Misfortune, but the Author of it was hid in Clouds.—I endeavour'd to gain some of his Servants, who I knew were in the Secret, but to no Purpose; they were more in his Interest than mine, and my Enquiries, which they doubtless inform'd him of, served only to render him more cautious, and at the same time encreas'd his Ill-Humour to me; this threw me into very great Agitations, nor could I see any way to extricate myself.

I was one Day extremely melancholy, and had retired to my Closet, to give a loose to my Complaints, on Account of some very unkind Speeches I had that Morning been treated with, by Monsieur *De G*——. *Christina*, that trusty Servant who you cannot but remember, since it was she whom I entrusted to bring you from the Convent, came in and found me in this Condition. She press'd me so earnestly to reveal the Occasion, that moved by the Grief she shewed, and convinced of her Fidelity, I discovered the whole Affair to her, which as soon as I had done. Ah, my dear Lady, cried she, you are too good, and have too long submitted to the Caprices of an unworthy Husband.——Instead of Tears and Lamentations which may prejudice your Health, you should rather think of some way to put an End to his Irregularities.

Alas, *Christina*, replied I, what is it in my Power to do——is it possible for me to prevent his liking another Woman and slighting me?——Yes, Madam, said she, in my Opinion, Men are just what we please to make them——haughty when we are submissive, and as meanly cringing when we exert ourselves——too much Tenderness on our side, is the sure way to destroy theirs; and Indifference the only way to preserve any sort of Equality with them.

Thou

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Thou speakest, answer'd I, like one who has never been a Wife, or rather if thou hadst a Mind rather to divert my Troubles, than wert able to offer any thing for their Mitigation. If I cannot do the latter, said she, indeed it would be some Pleasure to me to think I could the former ; but yet I cannot help imagining, that if it were possible for me, to be in your Ladyship's Place, I would soon cure Monsieur *De G*——, of his Passion for his Mistress, and make him more in love with me than ever. That would be extremely difficult, replied I, for two Reasons ; the most important of which is, I have no longer that blooming Youth so enchanting to Mankind.—— Ah ! Madam, cried *Christina*, interrupting me, you are still as beautiful as an Angel.—— The other Reason, resumed I, without taking any Notice of this Piece of Flattery ; Monsieur *De G*—— was always a Lover of Variety, and this Foible is so engrafted with his Nature, that I have the least hope he can ever throw it off ; so that could I discover the Object of his present Flame, and by any Stratagem make him become ashamed or weary of it, the Consequence of my Endeavours would be only to make him transfer it on some other, and but the more estrange him from me, especially if he found out that I made any Noise of it.

I allow this Observation to be just, Madam, said *Christina*, after having paused a little—— though I have little Experience of Mankind, I know there is a Pride in them, which renders them impatient of controul.—— I would never, therefore, advise a Woman to appear to lay any Restraint upon her Husband, for as they never will acknowledge themselves guilty though never so glaringly so ; they make an Accusation an Excuse for their Extravagancies, exclaim in Publick against the Ill-Humour of the Person they injure, and treat her insupportably in private.—— Nay, the Obstacles laid in their way, frequently give fresh Vigour to Inclination, and give a double Relish to Enjoyment, so that Stratagem, and that also very closely carried, on is the safest way a Woman can proceed.

I knew this Girl had been well educated, and had Wit ; but had not expected so much good Understanding as I now found her Mistress of.——I agreed entirely to her Opinion, but told her as I had observed the Maxims she now mention'd, yet found them without Success, I could not see which way I could proceed to reap any Advantage. There are some Occasions, Madam, answer'd she, when it is right to deviate from the common Rules of Prudence ; but the great Art is to find out the fit Time for it.

Permit me, Madam, continued she, perceiving I was silent and seem'd pensive, before I presume to offer my little Advice for the restoring your Tranquility to amuse you with an Adventure, I had sometime ago with Monsieur *De G*———. I never mention'd it before fearing to disturb your Peace, and thought I ought to be satisfied with the Consciousness of having behaved as was my Duty without acquainting you with it.——At that time I knew not you had any Suspicion of his Fidelity, though I knew he gave but too much Reason for it, and was fearful of creating in you any Disquiet on that Score, though he gave me very cruel Motives of Complaint ; but as I find now your Ladyship is no longer deceived by his Pretences, I think it proper you should not be ignorant of what is in my Power to reveal, because it may give you some Hints what Course will be most likely to reclaim him. Here she ceas'd attending my Permission, which I immediately gave her, and was, indeed, not a little impatient to hear what she had to say.

I was not quite Sixteen, said she, when Monsieur *De G*———happening I suppose to have a Vacancy in his Heart, which any new Object might fill up, took a Fancy to me. You may remember, Madam, I had not then the Honour to be so near your Ladyship's Person, as I am at present : My Business was to attend your Daughter, and wholly taken up with pleasing her, my Ambition extended no farther, and as I was never much guilty of diving into things in which I had no Concern, I penetrated not into the Affairs of the Family, nor had heard of any of that Talk of Monsieur

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De G———Amours, as I since have done, and for that Reason was the more surprized, at what afterwards befell me on his Account.

One Day when my young Lady was gone with you to the Opera, Monsieur *De G*———came into my Chamber, where I was ordering some little things of my own in her Absence. What are you alone, *Christina*, said he?———How happens it you are not with my Daughter at the Opera? Are you not fond of Musick, or is my Wife so barbarous, as to deny you that Pleasure?———I knew not well what I said, I was so much surprized at seeing him in my Chamber; but the Purport of my Answer was that you were too good to all your Family, to refuse them any convenient Satisfaction: Indeed, Madam, continued she, my Confusion was so great at the Honour he did me in speaking to me, which before that time he had never done, that I believe I look'd silly enough, to make him imagine I should readily yield to any thing he should propose.

I perceived he look'd at me with the utmost Attention, seeming to measure me with his Eyes from Head to Foot, the more Eagerness he express'd in viewing me, the more my Consternation encreased———you are very beautiful, *Christina*, said he, taking hold of my Hand.———I think it is an Injustice in Fortune to suffer a Girl of so much Merit to be in the Station you are; and am determined to make you happier than you could ever expect to be. Your Honour is very generous, said I, blushing, to take any Thought of so insignificant a Creature as I am. I know not, resumed he, how mean an Opinion others may have of you, but I see nothing in all *Paris* so amiable———you have a fine Complexion———regular Features———a most delightful Shape, and Eyes full of Spirit and Sweetness.———I wish no greater Pleasure than to gaze upon them at full Liberty———why do you turn your Head away? continued he, coming nearer to me, I must not be denied a Kiss from those little pretty pouting Lips.———For Heaven's sake, Monsieur, cry'd I, leave me, if my young Lady's Governess should happen to come, and see your Honour here, and inform your Lady, what would

would become of me,——fear nothing, reply'd he, I have a Servant that watches on the Stairs, and will give me Notice of any Interruption. In speaking this, he not only kiss'd me with a Vehemence which I could not approve; but also pull'd my Handkerchief on one Side, and was about to put his Hand into my Bosom; I thought it was time for me now to be very loud, in hopes that the fear of being heard would oblige him to retire; but I was mistaken, he had took the wicked Precaution to send most of the Servants out of the way on various Pretences, and I found myself too much in his Power; for though I had cry'd out twice no-body appear'd to my Assistance, and he was proceeding to Extremities.——I was in the utmost Terror, but did not lose a Presence of Mind which alone could have saved me——if you have that Regard for me you pretend, said I, you will give me first some Reason to be convinced of it.——Take me out of the Servitude I am in, and I shall believe you love me, and will be yours in the Way you desire. With all my Heart, reply'd he, make your Terms, let me but enjoy your Love, and all you can demand shall be settled on you, beyond even my own Power of taking it from you. Well then, said I, you shall give me a hundred *Lewis D'Ors* by way of earnest, and after that prepare a House for me to live in above Contempt. I agree, cry'd he, quite transported, and taking me in his Arms; no, said I, drawing back, no Favours till I have the Money.——Well, resumed he, a little surprized, I believe, to find I was so much more forward than he had Reason to expect on first attacking me, and withal so cunning and mercenary, you might have depended on my Word, loving you as I do; but since you insist upon it, I'll run to my Closet for the Money, and be with you again in a Moment.

He was no sooner out of my Room, than I flew up Stairs to one of your Women, who at that time lay ill, and by Consequence I was sure to find.——He'll not come after me here, said I to myself, and I'll take care never to be alone again.

I took, indeed, so much Precaution, and was always so much upon Guard, that for several Months he could not get an Opportunity of speaking one Word to me ; though he made many Contrivances, all which I baffled by the Assistance of my Guardian-Angel.

I began at last to flatter myself, that tired with so many fruitless Attempts he had given it over, and thought of me no more ; when as I was rising one Morning, I heard him in my young Lady's Room : A Wainscot Partition only dividing the two Chambers, not a Word that pass'd escap'd me. I was not surpriz'd at his being up so early, for I knew he never lay long ; but it seem'd a little strange that he came into his Daughter's Apartment at that Hour, and that the Door was open'd without my being call'd.

At first I could not tell what to think, as Mademoiselle *Mignon* was too young and innocent, to apprehend any thing of that kind her Father had in his Head ; I knew not but he might make some Pretence or other of coming into my Chamber, my Door was not fastened, so I bolted it, but so softly as not to be heard, and having thus secured myself, I listened to the Conversation, with more Curiosity than I ever knew before, or have since felt.

Why would you have me complain of poor *Christina* to my Mother, said my dear Lady ? She never offended me in her Life, or deserved I should say the least unkind Word of her ——— That's nothing, reply'd Monsieur *De G* ——— 'tis for her good that I put you upon it : ——— Therefore do as I command you ——— I have a Husband for her, and while she continues in our Family, she won't think of settling herself in the World ——— if you knew the Advantage it would be to her, you would do it without my bidding ; but I am sorry to see that one of your Age should so little regard what I say.

He added many other things to the same Purpose, which at last put the young Lady into Tears ; but still she remain'd averse to accusing me, still protesting that as I never gave her any Cause she knew not how to frame her Words to such an Untruth. A Remonstrance such as this from a Child, one would imagine should have made a Parent ashamed of his Injustice ; but how hardened

dened is the Heart inspired with Inclinations, such as those of Monsieur *De G*——at that Time!

Finding he could not prevail on her to become his Agent in this wicked Purpose, he flew into a Passion, and rising hastily from the Chair he was sitting in, well, said he, I have done; but remember, *Mignon*, I will never forget your Disobedience.

You know, Madam, said *Christina*, the uncommon Love and Respect this sweet Lady has for you both, she burst afresh into Tears, and begging Monsieur *De G*—— to come back, entreated his Forgiveness, and promised to be directed by him.

If your Repentance be sincere, said he, I shall forget what's past, but 'tis upon Condition you punctually observe what I shall enjoin.——Tell your Mother, continued he, that you perceive *Christina* is in Love——that she has had the Boldness to entertain her Gallant in your Apartment when you have been abroad—and that coming Home one Day unexpectedly, you found them together and saw him——

I was so terrified, and at the same so provoked at the cruel Stratagem contrived against me, that I unbolted my Door and flew out, what, said I, must Innocence itself be rendered guilty to accuse me?——I see now that nothing will be spared for my Undoing; but mean as I am, my Complaints, perhaps, may move Compassion, when I proclaim to all the World, the Motives Monsieur *De G*——has for having Recourse to such infamous Proceedings;——but first, continued I, my Lady shall be acquainted with the whole Affair——she is too just and generous not to pity, and afford me her Protection.

I was all in Tears, as I spoke these Words, and was, indeed, coming to inform your Ladyship of the cruel Plot against me; but, Monsieur *De G*——stopp'd me, you are a foolish Girl, cry'd he, you don't think sure I was in earnest.——I said all this only to make you come out of the Chamber, in a Rage, and afford some Diversion to my Daughter. I should, indeed, have been very foolish, if I had not seen this was

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spoken with a Design to give a Turn to the Affair, and by making it pass for a Jest, prevent Mademoiselle *Mignon* from thinking of it any more, or mentioning it to you. I paused a little considering what was best for me to do, and for the Reasons I have already mention'd, being unwilling to trouble you with it, I retired, though not without a Murmur that express'd my Dissatisfaction.

When I reflected on this Affair, after my Passion was a little abated, I was persuaded within myself that as he had ventured to go this Length, he would go yet farther, and never rest till he had found some way to get me discharged from the Family, in hope that Misfortune would reduce me to accept of his Proposals, or in Case of my Refusal be a sufficient Revenge for the Disappointment I had given him. How to proceed I knew not, loth I was to leave my Place, and still more loth to give you any Cause of Complaint, so resolved to wait the Issue, but to be so careful of myself, as never to give him any Opportunity of surprizing me.

Near a Year past over without my receiving any Molestation of that kind, when accidentally, pardon me Heaven, I ought not to make use of that Expression, since 'twas by thy all-directing Providence alone, I made a Discovery of a second Plot against me, if possible more cruel, and more dangerous to me than the former.

Maria the Chambermaid under me, had pretended an excessive Fear of Spirits, and very much press'd me to become her Bedfellow, as both of us lay alone: Though I never did any thing but laugh at such Apprehensions, I complied at last with her Importunities, and after we had agreed upon it——on the very Night I was first to be her Guest, going up Stairs I found a Paper, which I perceived had been folded up in the manner of a Billet.——I open'd it, and read to my inexpressible Surprise these Words.

The L E T T E R.

*E*nclosed you will find a Bill for the five hundred Livres I promised you;——I rejoice to hear your Project has been so successful——I pretend to go out of Town

Town to-morrow, that I may not be expected by my Wife; but shall return late in the Evening, and be admitted by one of my own Men, who is in the Secret—— I shall then steal softly into your Chamber, and conceal myself in the Closet you mention, till I find Christina is in Bed——as she will suppose it to be you, she will make no Noise till it is past her Power to prevent my Designs: all you have to do therefore is to get her from my Daughter's Apartment as soon as possible——I had no Opportunity of speaking to you, so took this Means of giving you a Caution——Farewell, know me always for your Friend.

Tho' there was no Direction to this Letter, nor Name subscribed; it was easy for me to know the Person that wrote it, or for whom it was designed, and the Danger I had so miraculously escaped; I was sometime before I could resolve how to behave in this Affair, and as it was now near the Time of going to Bed, I was ruminating on it, when the wicked *Maria* came into my Chamber, and told me that your Ladyship had ordered her to do something, which would detain her later than the usual Hour, so desired I would not wait for her but go to Bed, as soon as I was dismissed from my Attendance on Mademoiselle. I looked on her while she was speaking, and whether it were owing to her own Sense of the Crime she was about to be guilty of, or my Knowledge of her Intentions, I cannot say, but certain it is, that she that Moment looked with a Countenance that had something in it hideous——I could not bear to turn my Eyes upon her, but as soon as she had done speaking, I have found a Letter, said I, which I believe belongs to you, and then presented her with the shocking Paper——never was Confusion such as hers at my delivering it to her, she but cast her Eyes upon it, and was Thunder-struck——good Heaven, cried she, as soon as she could speak, how mysterious are all thy Ways!——Pardon me, good God! and pardon me, *Christina*——I see and am ashamed of what I have done, and now rejoice in the midst of my Disgrace, that the horrid Crime I had consented to further is disappointed of

being perpetrated. With these Words she burst into a Torrent of Tears, and appeared so truly penitent that I was very much moved at it. Well, *Maria*, said I, I will believe you were unwarily drawn into a Partnership in this cruel Design upon me——I am preserved, and innocent——it is therefore my Business now to comfort you——depend upon my free Forgiveness, and that I will always pray you may find Pardon from above——I do assure you I will never divulge any Thing to your Prejudice in the Family——all I have to ask, is that you would write a few Words to Monsieur *De G*——in the manner I shall dictate ; the poor Creature was so much pierced with my good Nature as she termed it, and a just Sense of her Error that she was willing to do any Thing that would appear a Reparation of her Fault ; what I desired her to write was in this Manner.

To Monsieur *De G*——

THE cruel Project you communicated to me, and which I too readily agreed to forward, is miraculously prevented from taking Effect——I beg for the sake of your own Peace both here, and hereafter, you will no more prosecute an Attempt, which I dare believe Heaven will always render fruitless——I am convinced that true Virtue is Heaven's peculiar Care, and if so, it will be in vain for any one to aim at its Destruction——the Maid whose Destruction both of us had conspired, assures me, she will pray, that we have better Minds——a just Consciousness of my Crime has made me a Convert, I hope the Monitor within your own Breast will have no less Weight with you——all will remain a Secret to my Lady, but it must be on Condition you for the future forego all Designs, perillous for those who engage in them ; and in the end shameful to yourself——that you may do so therefore is the earnest Wish of

Your most dutiful Servant,
Mar

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To this she would need add a Postscript, the Words o which as near as I can recollect, were these ;

P. S. *I return you the five hundred Livres you were pleased to enclose, for as I look upon them as the Wages of Sin, I durst not put them among those I have acquired by honest Labour, and hope you will convert them to uses more pious and more laudable, than that for which they were bestowed on me.*

When she had finished this Letter, she gave it to the Man whom she knew was entrusted with all the Secrets of his Master, and who had brought her the Letter and the Money. She ordered him to deliver it into his Hands as soon as he should arrive from his pretended Journey, and when she had settled every Thing necessary with him, she returned to me, and gave me the whole Detail by what Sollicitations he had prevailed upon her to become accessary to his intended Crime—— I flatter myself her Letter had some Effect on him, for he has never since, tho' near three Years have been elapsed, ever spoke one Word to me, nor much less ever renewed any Attempts of the Nature I have been mentioning——*Maria*, however a true Penitent, and always ashamed to look me in the Face, in spite of all my Endeavours to reassure her, was never entirely easy and having the offer of being entertained in Madam De L——'s Service, your Ladyship knows she quitted yours, since which I have never seen her.

Here *Christina* ended, said Madam De G——, and I asked her what Inference she had drawn from this Adventure, that would be of any Service to me. That he stands more in Awe of your Ladyship, replied she, than you perhaps imagine, and that proper Methods might put a stop to his Career of Vice.

The first thing in my Opinion, continued she, shou'd be to find out the Woman who misleads him, then to have her informed that if ever you should find out the Intrigue, you have Power enough to have her confined for Life——at the same Time I would have some Friend of Monsieur De G——'s talk to him in a very serious manner and after remonstrating to him the Injustice he

was guilty of, and that if he did not immediately change his Course of Life, you should be informed of it, and consequently a Rupture would ensue, your Grievances would be laid open, and his Reputation, which hitherto he had seemed so tenacious of, entirely ruin'd.

Tho' *Christina's* Advice did not suit with my Inclination, it occasioned in me a whimsical Resolution, and such a one as perhaps no Woman beside myself ever thought on, much less put in Practice——you shall judge of it, my dear *Jeanetta*, continued Madam *De G*——I never remember it without laughing, and I dare answer when you know it, you will be no less diverted. But I will not tell you at once the Plot, that came into my Head, tho' I did *Christina*, but acquaint you how step by step I carried it into Execution.

I began with going one Morning into my Husband's Closet, and having enquired how he did, the Carnival, said I, is near at hand, and I have an Inclination to pass both that and the Lent in the Country, and not return to *Paris* till after *Easter*, but would not do it without your Permission, so beg to know how you approve of it. The Idea of my Absence was too agreeable for him not to give a ready Consent; he not only told me I was my own Mistress, and should be ever so; but also accompanied that Compliment with a Purse of Gold, in order as he said to make the Carnival more pleasing.

The same Day *Christina* and I set out on our supposed Journey; but instead of going to my Castle, I went to her Mother's House: having made that Woman acquainted with my Design the Night before——a Man's Taylor was immediately sent for, and they having provided me with a Night-Gown, Cap and Slippers to prevent his having any Suspicion I was not of the Sex I pretended, I made him take my Measure, and bespoke two Suits of Cloaths, the one extremely rich, the other less so, and ordered them to be made with all possible speed. My Commands were punctually obeyed, and in less than four Days every Thing was got ready and I was metamorphosed into a fine Monsieur, and you cannot conceive how much this Disguise became me. Both *Christina*, and her Mother protested that I personated

a Man so naturally, that it was impossible for any one to think I was not really so.

Now, my dear *Jeanetta*, you will soon see into my Plot, which hitherto I dare answer you have no Notion of;—I had one Footman who I knew was perfectly in my Interest. This Fellow I had ordered to be a constant Spy on my Husband, and watch wherever he went, that he might find out where this Mistress who gave me so much Pain was lodged.

As Monsieur *De G*—imagined me out of Town, he was somewhat less cautious than he had been, so that it was no difficult Task for my Desires so far to be accomplished. In three Days the Man brought me News that a Lady whom my Husband went every Day to visit, often dined with, and seldom supped from, was called *Mademoiselle Julia*, and that she lived in a little Street near *Fauxbourg Saint Honoré*. This Discovery I looked upon as half Success, and immediately employed a Person *Christina's* Mother recommended to me, to enquire in the Neighbourhood where this Woman was lodged, what publick Places she frequented, and I soon found out that she went very often to the Opera, and Comedy, both of which she was extremely fond of. I hired this Fellow as a Footman, and without entrusting him with my Secret, for he imagined he served a Master not a Mistress, I made him get acquainted with *Julia's* Servant; and he soon proved how fit he was for the Purpose I employed him in, for supposing I had a mind to have an Intrigue with this Woman, he brought me an exact Intelligence of all her Motions.

Being informed she was gone to the Theatre, what Dress she had on, and in what Box she was seated, I followed her thither, and soon discovered by the Description, which of the many Ladies there, was she I sought after. She was tall, well shaped, and accompanied by another Woman, somewhat elder than herself, but very well dressed. I went into the next Box to her's, but had not presently a full View of her Face, it being so early that the Candles were not yet lighted, excepting some few here and there. The House however was extremely full, as it could not be expected to be otherwise, that

being the first Night of the Representation of one of Monsieur *Voltaire's* Tragedies——you have heard me often speak, continued Madame *De G*——of that admirable Author, and may remember with what Praises; indeed in this, I but concurred with the publick Voice in doing Justice to his Merit——the Knowledge of the Author who furnished this Night's Entertainment, was sufficient to draw all the Persons of Sense, or who desired the Reputation of it to be present.

When the Candles were lighted, I had a full View of the Face of Mademoiselle *Julia*, and heard her say in a very low Voice to the Person who was with her, that she trembled lest Monsieur *De G*——should come to the Play. By this I found she had not acquainted him with it, and could gather from some other Words they said to each other, that he was jealous of her, which pleased me extremely, as it forwarded my Contrivance.

Here I could not forbear interrupting Madam *De G*——I am in the utmost Impatience, cried I, for Heaven sake dear Madam do me the favour to tell me what end you proposed to yourself by doing all this; for I am utterly unable by what you have said to comprehend any Part of your Design.

You are in very great haste, replied Madam *De G*——with a Smile, it would be but just to keep you in Suspence, as they do in Romances, 'till the Incidents that follow, should by Degrees, give you leave to guess at the Catastrophe; but I should make a very gracious Queen, I don't love to refuse any thing in my power to bestow, without Prejudice to others——know then, that my Design was to get if possible the Affection of Mademoiselle *Julia*, make an Assignation with her, and contrive it so, that my Husband might surprise us together, and to be convinced of the Infidelity of those sort of Creatures.

Had I been a Man, I know not if I had not in good earnest, become the Rival of Monsieur *De G*——*Julia* had an enchanting Sprightliness in her Countenance——her Complexion was of a dazzling Whiteness, and when ever she looked upon you, her Eyes seemed

seemed to speak, and command your Admiration——the more I examined her, the less I was surpris'd at my Husband's Passion for her, yet it did not hinder me from prosecuting my Design, and tho' I was far from hating her, I could not bear he should continue to love her.

It was no difficult Matter for me to make an Acquaintance with her: Women of her Character, tho' never so well supported by one Man, are ready to enter into Conversation, with as many as shall think it worth their while to endeavour it. I talk'd a great deal to her, and as I was well dress'd, and she took me for a Person of Distinction, was very much pleas'd with the Compliments I made her. I entreated Permission to visit her, and tho' she did not immediately grant my Request, I easily perceiv'd she would do so before we parted——when the Play began, I was so charm'd with it, that I had like to have forgot the Business which brought me there——raise your Idea to every thing that can be call'd excellent, yet it will still be short of what this justly celebrated Poet presents us with——a Delicacy of Sentiment could never be carried to a higher Pitch——every thing was majestic, noble and interesting——the Actors were more the Heroes they personated, than themselves ever were in reality——Fancy, Energy, Sublimity, Tenderness were all united in this instructive Composition——Happy are they who possess Talents such as *Voltaire*, they merit to have Monuments erected to their Memory, which should continue to the end of Time—in doing Honour to Authors of this Rank, we do Honour to ourselves, and shew posterity we had a Taste capable of relishing Perfection.

I was not however quite unmindful of myself, and took the Opportunity of attacking *Julia* between the Acts, and had the Satisfaction, to observe that every time I spoke to her, she seem'd more and more dispos'd to listen to me, and when at last I press'd her very home, it is not, said she, out of any dislike to your Person, or Conversation, that I am at all reluctant to admit your Visits; on the contrary, you appear in my Eyes a dangerous Man——there is something too agreeable both in your Form, and Wit, for a Woman, who would pre-
serve

serve her Heart, to trust herself much with——— Besides, continued she, I have some other private Reasons, which deter me from entring into an Acquaintance with you. Here she ceased, but as I would not take what she said as a Denial, I renewed my Petition in terms so strong, that she at last consented, with this Condition, that the Visits I made her, should be between the Hours of Dinner and Supper, and that I would never insist on staying a Moment longer, than she thought it proper I should go. All this I readily agreed to, and the Preliminaries being settled, I had leave to visit her next Day, on which I said every thing that Men usually do on such Occasions, and perhaps exceeded most of them in my Complaisance, Women knowing best what will be most pleasing to their own Sex. She seemed, indeed, charmed with the Transports I express'd, but said, as I was leading her to a Coach, that waited for her, and the Person that accompanied her, You Men are deceitful ; while we are new to you, nothing so complaisant and fond ; but when once you have obtained your Wishes, nothing more careless and indifferent——— However, tho' I know this, there is something in my Heart, which will not suffer me to be ungrateful to the Esteem you express for me. She spoke this with so engaging an Air, that had I really been what she took me for, I had certainly been in love with her.

I was careful not to omit the appointed hour next Day, but was very much mortified at being obliged to quit the House, without seeing her, tho' indeed I learned enough to make me know my Plot was in as fair a Way of succeeding, as I could wish. At my Arrival, I found standing at the Door, the Woman who had been with her at the Play, and who I soon discovered was no other than her Servant and Confidant : She took me into a little Parlour, and told me, that Mademoiselle *Julia* was extremely concerned, that I should have the Trouble of coming at a Time, when it was impossible she could admit me, a Person whom she did not expect being, unluckily with her, and it was wholly improper I should be seen.

I thought, at first, that this Disappointment was a Piece of Artifice, common enough with such Women, to heighten

heighten the Passion I had pretended, and to bring me to explain myself, as to the Advantages, she might expect from my Acquaintance: in order, therefore, to prevent my labour being lost, when I should come again, it seemed proper I should begin by gaining *Gogo*, so was this Woman called, so made her a Present of ten *Lewis D'Ors*.——She blushed at receiving them, but whither through Joy, or Modesty, I leave you to guess, the Gold however had its usual Effect——it purchased every Secret I desired——She informed me that Monsieur *De G*——was passionately in love with her Mistress, that he was extremely jealous of her, and that it was no other than himself, who was at that time above with her——he was told, said she, by some of his Spies, that you talked to her at the Play last Night, and when we came home we found him waiting for us: he reproached her Ingratitude and ill Conduct, as he termed it, and has never left the House since. What makes us more unhappy, is, that his Wife is now out of Town, and having no restraint upon him, we shall find it an infinite Difficulty to do any thing without being in Danger of his surprising us——We used to have some Hours of the Day to ourselves, but now he either sends or comes so perpetually, that we have a miserable Time.

I then asked if Monsieur *De G*——made any amends by his Liberality for the Trouble he gave. To which she replied, that they had no reason to complain, but that she thought he might do better, for she knew him to be immensely rich: But, added she, Mademoiselle *Julia*, is not of a mercenary Temper——Complaisance more endears a Man to her, than all the Riches in the World——to offer her a Gratuity,* for any Favours she bestows, is the same thing, as striking a Ponyard to her Heart——I have often blamed this Folly in her, but there is no conquering Nature——I am obliged, continued the cunning *Gogo*, to receive all the Presents made to her, and to instruct her Lovers how to behave if they would succeed——if any one was to bring her a Sum of Money, or even a Ring or Bracelet, she would that Minute forbid him her House.

I took no Notice of what she had said on this Score, being determined not to pay too dear for my Curiosity, but asked her, how Monsieur *De G*—— behaved, so as, to get into her good Graces; why that, Monsieur, answered she, was all owing to me——he was quite brutal at the first, he fell in love with her at the Opera, had her followed home. and the next Morning wrote a Letter to acquaint her, that he was very much charm'd with her, that he knew she was kept by a Counsellor of the Parliament, who did not allow her very handsomely, and if she would break with him, said he I will give you a hundred *Lewis d'Ors* in hand, and a thousand Crowns per Month.

A fine way of Courtship indeed, cryed *Gogo*, my Mistress was highly affronted, and I went to him and reproved him, for his want of Politeness to a Woman of her Merit——he swore he had made use of the same Method to above twenty, who had never resented it, and to prove the Truth of what he said, shewed me a Letter, which he told me was the Original of what he wrote to all whom he had any Design upon of that Nature.

I could scarce forbear Laughing, when she spoke this, in her Account I saw my Husband's Picture drawn to the Life; but as I wanted to be informed of all relating to this Affair, I asked her how she brought it about, that two such Opposites as she described, should at last agree. Why, said she, I undertook to reconcile my Mistress to him, but obliged him to pay down a whole Years Advance into my Hands, besides the hundred *Lewis d'Ores*, and then he had leave to come, and the Counsellor was dismissed——But, pursued she, you cannot imagine the difficulty I had to bring him to part with all that Money at once, and I don't know whither ever he would have done it, if I had not made him believe the Counsellor was so much in Love, that we were in hopes of drawing him in to marry her.

I was now sufficiently instructed by this most extraordinary Servant, every Passage relating to my Husband and his Mistress, and could not help reflecting how ridiculous Men make themselves by putting it into the Power of such Wretches to expose them at their Pleasure,

but

but this not being a Place to indulge Meditation, I took my leave after having gained a Promise from her to contrive some means of my seeing her Mistress the next Day either at her own House, or some other Place she would find out.

By all that had passed I had no reason to Despair, and I found *Gogo* punctual to her Promise the next Day—they had on some Pretence or other got rid of Monsieur *De G*—and the beautiful *Julia* received me in a manner, which left me no room to doubt I had made a real Impression on her Heart, a thing not very common with Women of her Stamp——she was alone, and I could easily perceive she had summon'd all her Charms that Day, to compleat a Conquest over me——I say again, that had I been of a different Sex I must have loved her, there was a Modesty and Sweetness in her Conversation, that in spite of the Injury she had done me, made it impossible for me to hate her, and I found some kind of Consolation in my Misfortune, that I was not sacrificed, as I have known some very deserving Women, to a Wretch without any one Allurement, but Vice to justify the Change. I had not forgot the manner in which the Men make their first Advances, and behaved so as to make a very swift Progress in her Favour; all that remained farther for the compleating my Project was to procure an Assignment at Night, and contrive it so that my Husband should surprize us together.

But, my dear *Jeanetta*, continued Madam *De G*——when I was on the Point of entreating this destructive Favour of her, a Tenderness rose in my Heart, and pleaded so strongly in her Favour, that I hesitated a good while before I could speak of it——she seemed to love me so sincerely, had given me so endearing a Reception, and I discovered so much Sense and Good-nature in her, that I thought it an unparallelled Piece of Cruelty to contrive the Ruin of so amiable a Person, and who put so much Confidence in me——in fine, tho' Resentment struggled hard, yet I could not bring myself to a Resolution.

I had visited her four Days together, without coming
to

to the Point, for which I had taken all this Pains, but on the fifth, she put a Period to my Agitations, by making me of her own accord an Appointment to come the next Day towards Evening, which, said she, I am determined to pass with you, having something to communicate to you in private.

It was then my Business, according to the Scheme I had laid, to order that Servant I before mentioned as in my Interest, to acquaint Monsieur *De G*——— that *Julia* had a new Gallant, and that they were together at that Time, that he might have come and detected her in her Perfidy, yet did I not do this, and perhaps my Pity would forever have got the better of my Jealousy, had not Chance done that for me, which I could not prevail on myself to do: But of that hereafter.

I went according to the Time: *Gogo* was ordered to tell my Husband in case he should come, that *Julia* was gone abroad——I know, said that unfortunate Woman, that he will be incensed to the highest Degree, and perhaps run in search of me over half the Town, but where we do not love, we little regard the Pains we give to our Admirers——I know at any Time how to make my Peace with him, a few Tears, or a well counterfeited fainting away, will make him forego even the Testimony of his own Eyes, so, my dear Chevalier, continued she, we will have some Hours to ourselves in Spite of all his jealous Watchfulness.

You must know, pursued Madam *De G*——— that as it was necessary I should assume some Name, I took that of the Chevalier *Bellcour* upon me; but I now began to think I had brought myself into a Perplexity I should not know how to extricate myself from: *Julia's* Advances made me fearful she would expect I should be more the Lover than was in my power to be, and how to excuse a Coldness so out of Nature, and contrary to the Passion I had professed for her, I could not by any means contrive——I was just thinking to pretend a sudden Indisposition had seized me, and take my leave; and was preparing my Countenance to agree with what I designed to affect, when the charming *Julia* eased me of my Apprehensions, by these Words. I

I love you, my dear *Bellicour*, said she, and it is my Opinion of your Honour that engages me to do so, and also to make you the Confidant of the most secret Passages of my Life——tho' you are a Man, I imagine I see something in you directly opposite to the common Artifices, Deceptions, and Vices of your Sex, and therefore I will venture to lay open all my Soul, and implore your Assistance, as a Man of Virtue, and a Friend; for believe me that notwithstanding the Life I lead, I often waste whole Days in Tears and bitter Reflections. On what, beautiful *Julia*, interrupted I, you much amaze me——such Discourses are indeed what I little expected, but I beseech you let me know in what I can be able to serve you. What she had said had indeed very much moved me, and at that Instant I felt for her all that could be expected from a Friend, such as she seemed to want.

Yes, my dear Chevalier, resumed the weeping *Julia*, you are the only Person I ever saw who seems qualified both by Power and Inclination to put an end to my Distresses, and restore to me that Peace of Mind, which has long alas been a Stranger to me, but you shall be judge yourself, if you will permit me to reveal my unhappy Story, it will not be tedious and perhaps may let you more into the Deceit and Hypocrisy of some Sort of People than yet you have any Notion of.

I told her she would do me a Pleasure in reposing such a Confidence in me, which I gave her my solemn Promise never to abuse, on which she began her little Narrative in this Manner.



The HISTORY of *Julia*.

IOWE my Birth, said she, to the Amour of Monsieur the Marquis *De*——a general Officer, and Mademoiselle *De R*——the late celebrated Comedian—— I was privately brought up by a Woman, who had lived with

with my Mother, but falling into very bad Circumstances, I was left without Support——accustomed to Ease I knew not how to get my Bread by Labour——Necessity, not Inclination, made me enter into the way of Life you find me in——the first I yielded to, made me hope a Provision for my whole Days, but all his Promises were vain——he quitted me for a new Object, I was obliged to listen to the Temptations of a new Lover——he deceived me like the other——a third——a fourth——a fifth did all the same, and tho' so oft a Mistress, found myself without a Friend——it has not been in my Power to quit a Life which I so much detest, that the Approaches of a Man on that Score, is dreadful to me, and I shudder at the Apprehensions of what some of my Sex as well as yours, are but too well pleased with——I am every Day doing Penance, even while I am going the Road to Perdition, and I hazard the Salvation of my Soul elsewhere for doing what I would give any thing but my Soul to avoid——miserable here, and desponding for hereafter, I shall be reduced to the most frightful Extremity if not speedily relieved.

You seem surprized, continued she, and indeed have Reason to be so——I know my Words carry an Enigma in them which nothing can solve but entering into a serious Consideration on the Circumstances I am in——I am sensible that most People would tell me it was easy for me to quit a Course of Life so infamous to the whole World, and which I myself pretend to have an Aversion for——they would say all is but Artifice in me, that if I really repented I should reform, and that there were many ways by which I might subsist, if my Inclinations to live virtuous, were sincere.

But *Chevalier*, pursued she, I think, or I am much deceived, yet have a fund of Compassion in your Heart, that will not suffer you to judge of me with so little Charity, you will reflect how hard it is for a Woman educated in a genteel, tho' not a grand Manner, to descend to servile Offices for her Support——you will also think that even were all remembrances of former
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Plenty to be forgot by me, the Vices I have been guilty of, would not be so far forgot, as to suffer me to be receive'd into any Family of Reputation——you will rather pity than condemn me, but to shew you how much I have been disappointed hitherto in all my Attempts to change my Situation, I shall relate what I believe will seem very strange, but yet what Heaven knows to be true.

About a Year ago, being as now extremely alarmed at the State I was in, I made a firm Resolution to quit it, and of doing every thing in my Power to lose myself from these scandalous and wicked Bonds, which so long had fettered me——for this Purpose I sent for a Priest, I entreated he would take upon him the Direction of my future Actions, acknowledged to him my past Faults, lamented the Misery of my present Situation, and conjured him by his sacred Function to take Compassion on me, and find some charitable Means of extricating me from the Labyrinth of Guilt and Shame, I was involved in.

He listened to me with all imaginable Attention, exacted as the first Proof of my Sincerity, that I should make a general Confession, and while I was preparing for it refrain any Repetition of my former Irregularities, and concluded with assuring me, that if he found me a true Penitent he would exert the utmost of his Power to procure me an honest Subsistence.

This gave me some Consolation, and resolved to be guided entirely by his Advice, I discharged my Servants; sold the best Part of my Furniture, and all the superfluous Ornaments of Dress; broke off with a Lover who had provided for me, and retired to a little Lodging some distance from Town, where I lived concealed from all my former Acquaintance, past my Time in bewailing my Errors and beseeching Heaven to enable me to abandon the World for ever and its deceitful Pleasures.

My Director came frequently to visit me, and examine what Progress I made in my pious Resolution——I hid from him nothing of the Truth, omitted no Part of the Penances he enjoined me, and prayed twice as often as he had told me was necessary——no Acts of Mortification but what I chearfully went through, yet
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in spite of this State of Humiliation, Tears, Fasting, and all that can denote a Convert, I was three whole Months without being able to prevail on him to give me Absolution. He told me he durst not pronounce the sacred Benediction, till he was fully convinced, that what I called a Conversion, was not rather a Disgust, which might perhaps wear off, and I return to my former Vices—I then asked what I could do farther to render myself worthy of what I desired with so much Ardency ; and he answered that I must persevere, and time alone could prove the Sincerity of my Intentions. I often bemoaned myself to him, that I was so long delayed the Seal of my Tranquility, he remained inflexible, and nothing I could urge had the least Efficacy.

All this Time I was diminishing the little Money I had received for the Goods I had disposed of, and at length I had nothing left for the common Necessaries of Life—I then fell into a Melancholly, which was bordering on Despair, and rendered me guilty of fresh Sins——this I communicated also to my Confessor, and than it was I found the true Motive of his behaving to me in that manner——.

O my dear Chevalier, continued the sorrowful *Julia*, this Wretch, for I can call him by no other Name, since he prophaned the sacred Order he had assumed, made Religion a Cover for the most detestable Purposes, and instead of leading his Penitents the way to Heaven, aimed to plunge them headlong into Perdition——this Man, this Monster, was become enamoured of me, and knowing by my Confessions, that my Soul was averse to any such Crime, tho' I had so oft been guilty of it, contrived these Delays to the end my Subtance being gone, he might starve me to Compliance.—— When he found me reduced to the last Extremity, he made his impious Proposals to me, and in such daring, such blasphemous Terms as I tremble to remember——enraged, and shocked I drove him from my Chamber, told him that if he ever presumed to come into my Sight again, I would make my Complaint to his Superiors, that he might be punished according to his Deserts.

But alas! what was I preparing for myself? I might have thought he that could proceed so far would scruple nothing——my Refusal of his horrid Offers, turned the Love he had for me into the extremest Hate: He swore he would be revenged, and he kept his Word.

I fell into a violent Passion of mingled Grief and Horror after he was gone, and when I had a little vented it in Tears, prayed Heaven that the Baseness and Cruelty of this true Wolf in Sheep's Cloathing, might not stagger my Resolution, and I do assure you, that after having paid this Duty, I found my Heart more at Ease, and I determin'd the next Day to seek for some other more worthy Pastor; but here again my Designs were frustrated, about the Close of Day came an Exempt and four Soldiers, and hurry'd me to Prison without acquainting me with my Offence, or assigning any Reason for doing so, but the Execution of their Commission.

O! what an exorbitant Power has the Church, and how careful ought they who are the Heads of it, to be in strictly examining the Morals of those received into Holy Orders!——This cruel Priest, I afterwards heard had accused me of having spoke contemptuously of the Priesthood, and this was enough for being confined, till I should make my publick Submissions, or rather a private one to this Seducer; who frequently sent me Word, that if I would comply with what he had proposed, I should not only be enlarg'd, but maintain'd in a handsome manner, out of the Charities given to the Church; but I chose to perish sooner than ever yield, to what I always look'd upon, and still do, as the worst kind of Sacrilege. It was to no Purpose, I told my Story to all that came near me——it was in vain I wrote and petition'd——all I alledged was look'd upon as an Invention, and an Aggravation of my Crimes——some would not report it, and those that did, had no other Effect than to occasion my being more severely treated.

Near three Months did I languish in this miserable Situation, and I began to despair of ever being released, when Providence ordain'd it so, that the Author of my Misfortune should also, though much against his Design, be the means of delivering me.—He had the Bold-
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ness to make the same Overtures he had done to me, to the Wife of a Commissary——she had Presence enough of Mind to seem yielding to his Desires, appointed him a Time to visit her, acquainted her Husband with it, who with several Friends and two Priests, who without knowing why they were invited, were placed in the next Room, and were Witnesses of his Prophaneness——He was immediately seized, the Order was scandalized by it, and a long Series of Crimes of the like Nature being afterwards proved upon him, my Complaint came under Consideration, and I was set at Liberty——what became of him I know not, but it is thought he was privately made away with, to prevent farther Noise.

The first Use I made of my Enlargement was to go to Church, and return Thanks to Heaven. I had heard from the Woman with whom I lodg'd, of a Man who had an excellent Character, both for his Piety and Learning——to him I applied, and acquainted him with my whole History : He seem'd struck with Horror at the Proceedings of my former Confessor, and took three Days to consider what could be done for me ; at the End of which he came to me, and told me he had now thought of something to enable me to pass the Remainder of my Days in Peace.

I had not Patience to ask him what it was, so transported was I at the hope of being rescued from Want, which I now felt severely.——I threw myself at his Feet, assuring him I should be eternally oblig'd to him, and that I would pray incessantly to Heaven for his Preservation.

But, O ! *Belcour*, what had he done for me !——is it thus good Heaven, that the Stewards of Charity distribute the Sums that are raised in pious Contributions !——He had ordered I should be received into the Convent of *les Filles du bon Pasteur*, and order'd me to be there next Day, where he would meet, and introduce me.

I knew very well what sort of a religious House this was, and that in order to be admitted, I must own myself to have been a common Prostitute; as I had never been what can justly be called so, though render'd too guilty

guilty by my Necessities, that Thought was insupportable: Neither, indeed, did a Convent, though of the most reputable kind, at all suit me——I stifled my Grief and Disappointment, however, as well as I was able; knowing by Experience how dangerous it is to irritate the Church, and promised to be there at the Time he mention'd; though, indeed, I never intended to keep my Word, nor seek Consolation from such People, where so much is wanting to render them either compassionate or charitable, and who think all Virtue consists in a blind and rigid Zeal.

I was now oppress'd with Sorrow, and in the most destitute and forlorn Condition imaginable, after a thousand cruel Reflections, I bethought me of a Servant who had formerly had lived with me, and received some Profit by her Service.——I wrote to her to come to me, and she immediately obey'd my Summons; she had always a tender Regard for me, and she gave me Proofs of it, after I had with Tears related all that had happened to me——instead of making me any Answer, she left my Chamber with as much haste as she had entered it; and I began to think that she had deserted me on the Account of my Distress; but I was soon convinced to the contrary, in about a quarter of an Hour she returned, and brought with her all she was Mistress of in the World, desiring I would make use of it as my own, and that she should think herself happy to be again my Servant, and to spend all her Days with me.——I embraced her with Gratitude and Tendernefs, accepted her Offer, and gave her my Promise that whatever happened, I would never more part from her.——'t is this Gogo who you now see with me, and to whom I have been so much obliged, that I love her with the Affection of a Sister.

Thus was I compell'd again by my cruel Destiny to return to what I had taken so much Pains to avoid—a Counsellor of the Parliament for some time supported me; but as I found he was on the Point of withdrawing his Allowance, I broke off with him in Favour of Monsieur De G——, from whom I at present receive a handsome Maintainance. This, dear *Belcour*, is my real

History, from which you may easily comprehend, how much I abhor the Life I lead, and how infinitely I should rejoice in having an Opportunity of quitting it.

I was moved even to Tears, continued the excellent Madam *De G*——at this melancholy Relation; but had the utmost Impatience to know what Designs she could have on me, and why she had made Choice of one so much a Stranger to her, for her Adviser and Confident. I was going to ask in what she would command me, when she prevented me by saying; you are the only Man in the World that I depend on to draw me from the Precipice in which I am fallen.——You have often assured me that you love me, and as you have never approach'd me with those Freedoms which render your Sex so disagreeable to me, I am apt to flatter myself it is rather a solid Friendship, than a vague and wanton Passion you are inspired with in my Favour.——I hope I do not deceive myself in this Conjecture; but to make Tryal of it, assist me I conjure you in taking the only Step I wish.——I only ask your Protection——the Money Monsieur *De G*——has bestowed on me, is sufficient to set me up in some honest Trade; I would change my Name, and Place of Abode, as well as my Conduct; and as a Person cannot go to any strange Place without some Recommendation, 'tis that I would entreat of you, depending on your Secrecy and Readiness to promote my Interest, when you shall find my Industry entitles me to it.

I was opening my Mouth to answer her Requests, and to encourage her in a Design I so much approved, when we heard *Gogo's* Voice screaming at the Door, and using her utmost Efforts from hindering Monsieur *De G*—— from coming in.——He had been inform'd that *Julia* was not gone out, and that a Gentleman had been seen to enter——half frantick with Rage and Jealousy, and determin'd to be convinced, it was in vain she attempted to obstruct his Passage, he rushed in with two of his Servants, flew up Stairs, and seeing the Door shut where we were, order'd them to break it open immediately.

Julia was terrified lest Murder should ensue, if I were found with her, I told her that I had infallible Means

to pacify him, yet to make her easy I would conceal myself——she entreated I would, and I went into a Closet while she unlock'd the Door. The Scene was very pleasant, my Husband began to storm, on which she affected to be as much in a Passion.——He asked what she had done with her Gallant, she protested none had been with her; but that being indisposed, she had order'd *Gogo* to deny her to him.——In fine, after a great many Reproaches on both sides, they quarrell'd themselves Friends; and *Julia* desired he would go with her into the next Room, pretending she had something to shew him, imagining no doubt, but that I would take that Opportunity of elcaping; but that was not my Business.——No time could be so fit as this for the Execution of my Design, and just as my Husband pass'd by the Closet, I stirr'd myself so as to make him hear somebody was there——he started, and then cry'd out, infamous Woman! is it thus you have deceived me? these Words were accompanied with several Blows, which made her cry out——I flew from my Concealment and, laying one Hand upon my Sword, and with the other, taking him by the Shoulder, sye, Monsieur, said I, how dare you treat a young Lady with such unmanly Insolence?——Monsieur *De G*——was never very fond of Rencounters, such as my Behaviour threatned; he grew pale, and stepping back, cry'd he had paid too dear for that unworthy Woman, not to have her all to himself——that might have been proper enough some Years ago, said I; but Men of your Age are fit only to maintain Mistresses for those who are younger.——I could, not speak this without bursting into a Fit of Laughter which spoiled all. Monsieur *De G*——presently knew me; but was, perhaps, more alarmed at doing so, than he had been before.——My Wife, said he, and was so disconcerted that he fell back into an easy Chair; as I was fearful of the Effects of such a Surprize, I threw myself upon him, and instead of reproaching his Infidelity, rally'd him in a fond manner, for his tyrannical Treatment of so lovely a Creature as *Julia*.

His Astonishment and Confusion being a little over, he begg'd to know the meaning of this whimsical Ad-

venture, I gave him the whole Detail of it without Disguise, and concluded by saying, that so far from disapproving the Esteem he had for my charming Rival, I would be the first to entreat he never would withdraw it.

If seeing me in her Apartment, and in a Habit he could little have imagin'd I should ever assume, had surprized him, it was far inferior to what this Request occasion'd in him—he look'd on me, and then on *Julia*—lifted his Eyes one Moment to Heaven, the next fixed them on the Ground, and appear'd in such Perplexity, that I thought it necessary to ease him of it, which I did by obliging *Julia* to repeat her Story. Not all the Terror and Confusion, the Discovery who I was had given her, could hinder her from discanting on her Misfortunes with a peculiar Grace.—She concluded with the most earnest Entreaty, to be taken from her present way of Life, and interwove her Supplications with such pious Reflections, on the Article of Salvation, that Monsieur *De G*—could not help being moved.—We all wept in Concert, and on my desire my Husband settled a Pension on her, sufficient to maintain her above Want.

Thus, my dear *Jeanetta*, continued Madam *De G*—ended an Adventure, on the Success of which I do not a little value myself.—*Julia* remains in *Paris*, and lives in a manner conformable to the good Inclinations, which won me to take pity of her.—I visit her as often as I come to Town, and have a great deal of Pleasure in her Conversation; but my greatest Happiness is, that Monsieur *De G*—is entirely reclaimed, and leads a Life of the utmost Regularity, for which he is so complaisant as to tell me, I may thank my own good Conduct and Sweetness of Disposition.

We enter'd the Town where we were to dine, just as Madam *De G*—had finish'd her Story—I thought it no less agreeable than interesting, and it gave Occasion to many Reflections on the Temptations of Poverty, and the Duty incumbent on Parents to provide for their Children a Refuge from it, as far as is in their Power.

The Evening of the same Day we arrived at the Castle——Monsieur *De G*——received me with the greatest Respect, and the young Mademoiselle *Mignon* with an equal share of Tenderness.——I testified my Gratitude by all the Acknowledgments that Words could form, and as all the Civilities that pass'd between me and this amiable Family were perfectly sincere, the Pleasure was so too.

After the first Compliments were over, I ask'd for *Christina*, she was in the Room, but so alter'd by a late Fit of Sickneſs, that I did not know her; but on hearing me mention her Name she flew to me, took me in her Arms, and thanked me for remembring her. Indeed, I always loved her, but the Instance her Lady had given me of her Virtue, render'd her much dearer to me than ever.

Madam *De G*——conducted me to the Apartment design'd for me, and I had scarce put off my Travelling Habit, when her Husband, who had left us alone together, came in and ask'd if I was ready to see some Company who were just arrived? I had no time to reply, that Moment the old Marquis enter'd follow'd by his Son, and the Count *De Saint Fal*. I was all in Confusion at the sight of them, for though by all Circumstances I concluded I was to meet them there, and that in this House I should receive the Decision of my Fate, yet I could not help feeling at their Presence, some Emotions to which I knew not well how to give a Name.

The old Marquis complimented me on my Recovery, but neither of the young Noblemen spoke a Syllable, nor offer'd to approach me; I followed their Example, and directed my Discourse wholly to him who had spoken to me;——after I had wish'd him Joy on his looking so well, he told me that the Small-Pox in his Opinion had rather improved than any way diminish'd my Beauty; but as to my Son, said he, it is quite otherwise, if ever he was happy in the Affections of the fair Sex, he must not now expect a Continuance of it; that rugged Face of his will entirely lose him among the Ladies. This little Piece of Raillery I thought touch'd me, and I could not keep myself from answering, that the Love of a Woman, who regarded only the Person of

a Man was little to be valued ; but put the Case my Sex were all so weak, the young Marquis had no Reason to be alarm'd since he seem'd the same as ever in my Eyes. I took this Opportunity of giving him a Glance, which convey'd much more of my Soul than was proper for me to reveal in Words You are very good, *Jeanetta*, said the old Marquis, but partial Eyes spy no Defects, so I am not surprized at it.

I made no reply to these Words, but blush'd and hung down my Head, as fearing I had already spoke too much.——The old Marquis seem'd all collected in himself, and ruminating on something very material——in Complaisance to him the whole Company were mute, and there was a general Silence, for I believe the Space of Three Minutes.——I knew not what to think——Hope and Fear by Turns possess'd me, and Suspence gave a hurry to my Spirits, which had it continued much longer, might have had a bad Effect on me.——I trembled inwardly, and it was with Difficulty I kept my Countenance from changing, when the Father of my Lover ask'd Monsieur *De G*——if he had given Orders we should not be interrupted, to which the other answering that he had, it is well pursued he, then turning to me, spoke in the following Terms.

The Time is now come, my dear *Jeanetta*, said he, to put an End to all your Troubles, and to crown your Virtue.——I must acknowledge that your Beauty, and your Wit merit a Fortune superior, to that which you are going to enjoy ; but yet these Qualities would never have gain'd upon me to decide in your Favour ; it is the Proofs you have given me of your Virtue, and a certain Majesty of Sentiment, which I could never have imagin'd in you, without the Tryals you have been put to——severe in the enduring, I confess, but glorious in the End——What these Proofs, or these Tryals were are yet a Secret to you ; but I will now explain all.——I knew the Passion you had for my Son, as well as the Excess of his for you ;——but I knew not whether you were worthy of the one or the other, or whether either of you were worthy of my Approbation, of your mutual Desires, to prove you first, I therefore assumed the Lover, omitted nothing that I thought might gain
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your Favour, I went so far as to offer to marry you, in order to discover whether a certain present Establishment, might not tempt you to forego one altogether uncertain, and which according to the Sentiments I seem'd possess of, you had little Reason to hope would ever be your I o'.——I could not suffer a Son for whom I had so great Affection, should run the Risque of marrying a Woman, who had only Grandeur for her Aim, in engaging his Heart, and this was the Method I took to penetrate into the inmost Recesses of yours.——My Search discover'd even more than I could conceive of Fidelity, Tendernefs, and Sincerity, and from that, I set you down as worthy of him, as his considering your intrinsic Merit, without any Regard to Birth or Fortune, render'd him worthy of you.

All that now remain'd, continued he, was to discover if this Son, so much beloved by me, deserv'd I should sacrifice for his Contentment, all Memory of my Rank, and all Regard for public Censure, in consenting to a Match of such Disparity in Point of Blood, and this I thought could be done by nothing, but his being willing to resign all that was dear to him in Life, for my sake.——Had *Forfan* succeeded in his Endeavours of finding where you were conceal'd, I should have begun this Tryal by obliging my Son to confess the Truth, and deliver you into my Hands, and this would have saved both of you the many Dangers you have run; but Heaven, that has punish'd my Presumption in attempting to fathom like itself the Hearts of Men, after threatening to deprive me of my Son, has been pleas'd to restore him to me, and also preserve a Treasure for him, with which his very Life was wound up, and which was ever destin'd to be his.

My next Stratagem, dear *Jeanetta*, was that pretended Fit of Sickness, which every one imagin'd to be real ——How, my Lord, cry'd the young Marquis, kissing his Father's Hand, is it possible the cruel Condition in which you seem'd, should be no more than counterfeited? No more, indeed, reply'd the Marquis, but let me proceed, and every thing shall be made clear.

I think, pursued he, I acted the part of a sick Man naturally enough, nor was it difficult for me to make it believed, as I would have it; *Forfan*, whom I had taken
into

into Favour again, on the Service he had done me, in getting your Letter intercepted, was let into the Secret, as was also my Physician, and two Valets-de-Chamber, as these were the only People who came much about me, it was easy with their Assistance to impose on the rest of the Family—The Event answered my most sanguine Wishes; and by sacrificing your Love to me, have prov'd, you merit that I should sacrifice all the Scruples that might oppose your Happiness—Nor, added this excellent Nobleman, addressing himself to me, was I less satisfied with your complying with my Son's Request, in so tender and trying a particular—Immediately had both your Virtues been rewarded—you were just going to be united, when Nature too powerful for your generous Resolution, retarded your Happiness—one Moment more, and my Son had been in Possession of that Hand, you thought yourself about bestowing upon me—your fainting away, the Sickness which ensued, prevented the pleasing Surprise I had prepar'd for you. Oh! how severely did I then repent, my not discovering myself sooner.

But Heaven, whom I never ceased imploring, in Mercy has restored you to me, and gives me the Power to finish what I have begun—Approach, my dear Son, continued he, taking me by the Hand, receive from me that *Jeanetta*, for whom you so long have sigh'd—by yielding you have gained her, and in her a Jewel, you can never set too great a Value on.

Never were Agitations equal to mine at that Instant—my Joy was so great it even became painful—My Heart was full, and my Eyes poured out my Transport—the old Marquis himself dropt a Tear, Monsieur and Madam *De G*—with generous *Saint Fal*, joyned in this affecting Scene—my Lover could not speak, but we both fell at the Feet of him, whom we now look'd upon as more than a Father.

Rise, my dear Children, said he, I am truly happy in what I have done—but yet this is not all that Prudence requires, every one ought to have some regard to the World—I have concerted Measures so, as to keep the Extraction of *Jeanetta* a Secret—we that know her, know her to be greater in her Qualifications than any Birth could make her, but considering what Slaves we

are to Prejudice, I think it Policy to impose on those of my own Rank, and pretend her descended of a Race, which has no Existence, but in my own Invention.

In fire, I have made every thing ready for the Celebration of your Nuptials—The Contract you both sign'd, and has cost so many Tears, is drawn in your Names ————so, my dear Child, said he to me smiling, you see I did not forget my Son, the Uneasiness you express on the Account of a Provision for him, was without foundation, but you may remember, I then told you we should all be satisfied, and I think I have kept my Word. ————I have nothing now more to inform you of, than that as soon as I found you were recovered, I came to these worthy Friends, and related to them the whole Affair; but I enjoyned Secrecy, because I was willing to be the first, from whom you should receive the News of your Happiness.

Thus ended the Marquis his obliging Speech, fain would I have given Vent to the Extacy of my Soul, in the most tender and grateful Acknowledgements, but Modesty restrained my Tongue ——— not so my Lover, he threw himself twenty times at his Father's Feet, kiss'd his Hands as often, and seem'd even wild, with Gratitude and Joy—After some time spent in Acknowledgements on our Parts, and Congratulations on the other, the Marquis told me, that my Father and Mother were in the House, he having desired Monsieur *De G*—to send for them, in order to be Witnesses of my Marriage, tho' as yet they knew not on what Occasion they were invited; but gave me to understand, they must return no more to their Cottage, it being not consistent with the Measures he had taken of concealing who I really was ———they shall not be Losers by it, said he with a Smile, I will give you my Estate *De F*———*A*———, which is an hundred Miles off, and will bring you in twenty thousand Livres a Year———you shall live there with them, and your Husband, 'till I find a proper time to have you nearer me; but your Parents shall remain there, and enjoy it for their whole Lives, and that will be an Attonement for quitting their native Place———you'll have time enough to instruct them, in
your

your Journey, how to behave : it is not very difficult to assume an Air of Ease, when one is really at ease.

How excellently good was this !——how greatly did this worthy Nooleman requite all my Sufferings on his Account ! but if I should attempt to speak my Gratitude, it would be imposing a Task upon myself, which I should never be able to perform, and I have often thought, that it is on such Occasions, that we are truly sensible, how insufficient the Organs of the Body, are to represent the Ideas of the Soul.

Hitherto I never had Courage to own to the old Marquis that *Barbara* was my Aunt, but the Profusion of Kindness he now treated me with, emboldened me to it ; on which he said, I am glad of it, we shall make one more Person happy.

This dear and worthy Father of my Lover, informed us also, for before he had not Time to do it, for Subjects more interesting, that he had retained in his Service, only those who attended him in his pretended Sickness, and discarded the others to prevent Discovery——I have dismissed *Forfan* too, said he, because he once was impertinent, and exceeded his Commission, but have provided so well for him, that he has no Reason to complain.

My Happiness was too perfect to admit of Resentment, and I interceded with so much Eagerness, that he might be admitted to partake of the common Joy, that he was again received into the Family, and as I have spoke of his ill Behaviour, 'tis but just in me to say, that after he was so, he never gave any Cause for Discontent.

Madam *De G*——perceiving every thing was settled, reminded us of going to Supper : every one seem'd ready to agree to her Proposal, the Satisfaction of the Heart generally gives a good Appetite——'tho I dare answer, that till she spoke, the young Marquis, any more than myself, never once thought of it——as we sat at Table, I could read Impatience in his Eyes, perhaps too mine spoke the same Language. I have in the beginning of these Memoirs promised Sincerity, and have always maintained it, I will not therefore in the Conclusion

clusion deviate : 'tis certain I longed to have my Happiness compleated, nor is it to be wondered at, since I had experienced too many Disappointments to be secure of any thing till I had it in possession ; but blessed be Heaven they were now all over, and all ill Fortune quite forsook me.

When Supper was ended, I flew to my Apartment, where my Father, Mother, and Aunt attended to speak with me, tho' they little thought on what Business,—I presently discovered myself to them, fell at their Feet, entreated their Forgiveness that I had deceived them by a fictitious Name, acquainted them with my Reasons for so doing, and the Honour I was at last raised to—Tears and Embraces could alone express their Joy,—my Mother, pressing my Cheeks close to hers, cried, Heaven be praised—I told them in two Words what was intended for them, and then proposed to my dear Aunt, who could hardly be persuaded I was her Neice, either to accompany us, or return to her beloved Village, offering her my Father's House, and Money to buy a Piece of Land to it—No, no, my dear Neice, cried she, since Providence has ordained it to be so, I am for no Village, when you are not there—you saw I quitted it to follow you, when I little thought the same Blood ran in both our Veins, and do you think I'll ever leave you now—Besides your Affairs are to be a Secret, and I wont so far deceive you as to say, I could keep myself from telling the whole Story to every Body, atleast to the Curate, and then I am sure it would soon go through the Parish. I could not forbear smiling at her honest Simplicity ; but begged she would nevertheless be on her Guard for my sake ; her Reply was, that I had nothing to fear, provided she kept out of her Village, as I had experienced in the Time she had lived with me.

It cannot be supposed, that any of us, especially myself, slept much that Night—Excess of Joy is as great an Enemy to Repose, as Excess of Grief—all my past Sufferings occurred to my Remembrance, and heightened the Idea of that Happiness, I was going to enjoy—the whole Family to whom I had been always

ways dear, partook in my Felicity, and were up much before the usual Hour——*Christina* came into my Chamber, to assist me in dressing for the sacred Ceremony——my Mother and Aunt followed her, but I had scarce got my Cloaths on, when the impatient Marquis ran up Stairs, and cried, through the Key-Hole, every thing is ready my Angel——they wait for you. The Door being opened to him, he flew to me and taking me in his Arms, kiss'd me with such an eagerness, as made me blush to Death, after this he saluted my Mother and Aunt with great Tenderness, calling them by those affectionate Names, and then turning to me, cried, what is it we stay for now ? his abrupt Eagerness made me smile, and giving him my Hand, he led me to the great Drawing-Room. The old Marquis, Monsieur and Madam *De G—*, with the Count *De Saint Fal*, and my Father received us, and conducted us to the Chappel, where before the holy Altar those Vows were made, which are never to be broke, and which my dear Marquis continues to assure me, he no more than myself, ever once repented of, that charming Ceremony, authorizing the most passionate Endearments, they are lasting as they are great.

The old Marquis's Scheme for concealing my Extraction was punctually put in Execution, and tho' there were many inquisitive, and busy Tongues, employed concerning our Marriage, their Discourse made no Impression to disturb our Peace——Entirely taken up with our own Happiness, all foreign Objects are unworthy our Attention——Two Sons and a Daughter, are the Fruits of our mutual Loves ; amidst the great World, 'tis in my own Family I find my Pride and Pleasure, my dear Marquis even more, if possible, my *Lover*, since he became my *Husband*, joins with me in paternal Fondness, and altogether we enjoy that true Felicity, which only Virtue can bestow, and only virtuous Minds be capable of receiving.——O, may our Example have many Imitators, and all who pursue the same Methods, be attended with the same Blessings !

F I N I S.



